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THE LIFTING OF A FINGER

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I.

FRANCIS BELLAMY leaned with easy grace against the newel-post at the foot of the broad stairway of his sister's house. He was clad in a long coat and knee-breeches of lavender satin, with a waistcoat of white brocade, and lace ruffles falling over his white hands.

Through the hall and up and down the stairs moved other figures wearing the costume of the last century, and beyond curtained doorways in adjoining rooms Francis caught glimpses of ever-changing vistas of powdered heads and periwigs. The sounds that met his ears were low laughter and the hum of many voices and, coming from the ball-room at his right, the sweetly plaintive wailing of violins.

With a bored air the young man shifted his position slightly, and as he did so the sword at his side got in his way. "I wonder if all these people feel the fools in their clothes that I do," he muttered to himself. "How silly of Alice to give this colonial ball. I believe women enjoy nothing so much as an opportunity to make their friends feel ridiculous."

However Francis felt in his unaccustomed attire, he looked well. His stalwart, broad-shouldered figure, brought to the high degree of development made possible by the athletics of the nineteenth century, showed to advantage in the costume of the eighteenth.

Now and then he caught snatches of the conversation of those who passed. "Yes, she is actually here; I saw her myself," he heard one woman say. "It scarcely seems possible," began her companion as they moved on out of earshot.

A moment later a couple paused near Bellamy and began to talk

in low tones. "Yes, she is here," the woman said. "I would not have believed it if I hadn't seen her. Were I in her place, I'm sure I couldn't be induced to stir out of the house."

"It must have been a blow to the old lady; she's as proud as Lucifer," murmured the man at her side.

"'Pride always goes before a fall,'" said his companion reflectively, trying to keep her voice free from malice, but not wholly succeeding. "Poor girl," the woman said in a tone that Francis thought must have made the object of her pity writhe had she been there to hear it.

"Oh, these velvet-clawed cats," he muttered as the couple moved away.

Presently he left his position by the stairs and moved in a somewhat aimless fashion towards the drawing-room. Most of the faces he passed were strange to him, for Francis Bellamy was better known at race-tracks and behind the scenes of theatres than among the society people who were his sister's friends.

At the other end of the hall the young man heard himself accosted, and turned to face Bob Stanton, a sleek club-man of middle age, whose legs seemed too small to support his rotund body.

"What are you doing here?" Stanton asked as the two men shook hands. "I thought you always fought shy of affairs of this sort."

"I generally do. I don't know what induced me to come to-night unless it was the opportunity to show off a pair of rather good legs."

Stanton glanced from Bellamy's well-shaped calves to his own spindly ones with a rueful face.

"You ought to ride your bicycle," remarked Bellamy, speaking in the half-insolent fashion of one who is careless of giving offence.

The two men had entered the drawing-room and were standing in the curtained recess of a window. Bellamy's black eyes roved about the room, now and then pausing to bestow a bold glance upon some beautiful face. One woman in passing chanced to raise her eyes to his: she crimsoned under his gaze and moved a trifle closer to the man at her side.

"You don't know many of the people here?" said Stanton, the rising inflection of his voice indicating inquiry.

"No, nor they me," returned Bellamy.

Stanton made no reply. He knew that the other was known to most people by reputation, if not by sight, and that the news of his presence had already spread through the rooms. The rumors of Francis Bellamy's wild, roving life which reached the higher world in which his sister moved were just vague enough to stimulate curiosity as to whether or not they could be true.

"Who is that girl sitting alone in front of this nearest mantel?" Bellamy asked suddenly, "and what color would you call her gown?"

"The color of skim-milk, I should say," returned Stanton, answering the other's second question first. "The girl is Miss Margaret Winthrop. You must know of the Winthrops."

"Yes, I think I do," Francis answered somewhat doubtfully. "Rather poor people who pride themselves upon family, aren't they?"

"Yes."

"Well, Miss Margaret is a deuced pretty girl, and I wish you'd introduce me to her. I like the way she carries her head: it shows spirit."

"Oh, Margaret Winthrop has spirit, plenty of it. It's a good thing too, for just now she has need of all she has."

"Why?" asked Francis.

"She has had a blow that would have crushed most women. But whatever she feels, Margaret carries her head high."

"What was the trouble?" asked Bellamy, his eyes roving again.

"She was to be married on the first of June to Jack Somers."

"Ah!" said Bellamy. "He is the man who set up for a saint and, just as his admirers had a crown ready for him, turned out to be the devil himself in disguise."

"Yes, that's the man," returned Stanton. "Somers was highly educated, of fine principles apparently, and even taught a class in some Sunday-school: just the kind of man to appeal to a girl of Miss Winthrop's type. And she loved him with all her heart and soul. Everyone, even the men, liked Somers and thought him worthy of Margaret, who is as good as God ever made a woman, and that is saying a great deal."

"And Somers turned out a greater rascal than myself, and that also is saying a great deal," declared Francis, laughing. "What was it he did? Robbed his firm, didn't he?"

"Yes, after first losing a lot of money for his employers by betraying a trust, and then ran away with a woman who——"

"I know: with Violet Dare," interrupted Bellamy. "Well, he needed to rob someone before going away with her. How did the girl over there take the discovery of all this?"

"She read it in the paper one morning and fainted. Since then she has not spoken of Somers even to her mother, they say; but instead of leaving town or shutting herself up, as most women would have done, she has gone on as though nothing had happened."

Again Francis glanced over to where the girl sat, just in front of a mantel that was banked with roses, her head held high and a smile upon her lips.

At that moment someone stopped to speak with her and the smile became a laugh, but Bellamy saw that there was no mirth in her eyes, and that the hand which held her fan clutched its pearl sticks tightly.

"She knows how to dress," he remarked, after a leisurely survey of the girl from her powdered hair to the tip of a satin slipper.

"I believe she had that gown made expressly for this occasion," Stanton replied. "She was to dance a minuet with Somers in the dining-room after supper. They had practised the dance together and had consented to go through it to-night to please your sister. There are to be a number of old-fashioned dances, including a quadrille performed by 'first families' only, but this minuet, in particular, was looked on as the feature of the evening: I suppose because Somers and Miss Winthrop were such a handsome couple. Then too the nearness of the wedding-day helped to centre interest on them."

Francis laughed,—a reckless, dare-devil laugh, that still had a note of contagion in it. Stanton frowned. He could not understand how anyone could see cause for mirth in Margaret Winthrop's plight.

"I should say she did need plenty of spirit," Bellamy remarked. "By George, she was plucky to come here to-night! I like a woman with spirit. I like horses with spirit too, and I enjoy taking it out of them."

Stanton gave a slight shiver of disgust. He felt as a man does who unexpectedly touches cold marble in the darkness.

"I want to meet her; take me over and present me," went on Bellamy.

Stanton hesitated. His companion was not the sort of man Miss Winthrop ought to meet; yet how could he refuse Bellamy's request in his sister's house?

Seeing Stanton's indecision, Francis fixed his black eyes on his companion with a look of amusement.

"Come," he said; "I'm not going to eat your paragon. If she's been engaged to Somers, I guess five minutes' conversation with me won't hurt her."

II.

THE two men moved forward to Margaret's side. "Miss Winthrop, may I present Mr. Bellamy, the brother of our hostess?" Stanton put the introduction in the form of a request.

Francis looked into the girl's eyes and smiled, his former sneering expression replaced by one that was frank and winning. He could be charming when he chose, and his face on the rare occasions when the mockery left it had the guileless look that appeals to women and often causes them to pin their faith to the blackest scoundrels that walk the earth.

But Bellamy's gaze brought no answering smile to Miss Winthrop's face, nor did it cause her to lower her eyes; she continued to look at him gravely, while Stanton stood by, ill at ease.

"Mr. Stanton tells me you dance the minuet," Francis said, breaking the pause that followed the introduction.

Stanton held his breath and cursed the other's folly. Was the man crazy, to speak of that dance to her, to let her know they had been discussing her? But Margaret did not flinch. Her gaze was unwavering, her voice steady, and her hand even relaxed its tight hold on her fan as she answered:

"Yes, I promised your sister I would dance it to-night, but the gentleman who was to be my partner is not here, and it is a dance few people know."

"And I happen to be one of the few," said Francis, "so why may I not take your absent partner's place? Will you dance a minuet with me?"

"I will, with pleasure." Margaret smiled as she spoke, and Stanton felt as though he were on solid ground once more, after being suspended dizzily in the air.

"Then I will see you after supper." Francis bestowed upon Miss Winthrop one of his charming smiles and strolled away.

When he sought his partner some time later he found her seated at one of the small tables that were scattered about the room in which supper was being served. He stood for a moment near the door-way and looked her over, studying each feature much as he would have noted the good points of a horse.

"A little too thin for her height," his inventory ran; "still, if she were stouter she wouldn't be so graceful; stunning gray eyes and a complexion that couldn't be bought at any price, or I know a dozen faded females who would have one like it."

Bellamy's roving eyes took in these details in a series of apparently careless glances in Margaret's direction. He saw something else too—that she was winning the admiration of those around her by the way she conducted herself in her difficult position. A stranger, coming into the room, would not have picked her out as the woman whose happiness had just been wrecked and her pride humbled in the dust. Nor did she overdo the matter; if her gayety was feigned, it had not the effect of being forced.

Presently a servant announced that the dances in the dining-room were about to begin, and Bellamy set down his glass and started in Margaret's direction. He knew that by this time he had been pointed out to most of those present as "Mrs. Westlake's scapegrace brother," and that the sight of a daughter of the Winthrops upon his arm would create no small sensation.

When he reached her side Margaret rose at once and, with a word of excuse to those she was leaving, took Bellamy's arm, and the two moved away, leaving a sudden silence behind them.

In the dining-room a crowd had already assembled. This apartment was the finest in a house which lacked nothing that money and taste combined could supply. The furniture was of black Venetian oak, heavily carved; the hangings and the tapestries covering the walls were of rich Gobelin blue. From the lofty ceiling depended a mammoth chandelier set with myriad glass pendants, which saved the room from being too sombre in effect, and high in the walls electric lights glowed, jewel-like, through round shades of opal glass.

"My sister was delighted when I told her you had consented to dance with me," Francis said to his companion as they paused beside a cabinet of china. "I understand she had counted on this dance as the feature of the evening."

"Thank you," said Margaret, but what she meant to thank him for, whether for telling Mrs. Westlake or for understanding that it would be a solace for her to dance the minuet, Francis did not know.

"There is to be a quadrille first, and our dance comes after that," he remarked.

The room was now filled, with the exception of a space before the fireplace which had been left clear for the dancers. Suddenly the rainbow brilliance of the chandelier vanished, leaving the room lighted only by the dull glow of the lights along the walls and the fitful glare of the log fire. A moment later the quadrille began to form and the music of a violin was heard.

"They make a pretty picture," observed Francis as the figures in the set bowed and moved forward in a stately fashion. "Who is the darky with the fiddle?" he added.

"A servant in our family," Margaret answered; "my mother loaned him to your sister to play for these dances. He was a slave of my father's before the war, and his grandfather belonged to my great-grandfather."

"How far back can you count your grandfathers?" queried Francis lightly.

Margaret laughed, but did not take the trouble to answer. While the last figure of the quadrille was in progress Mrs. Westlake came up to them.

"Miss Margaret, my dear, it is most kind in you to do me this favor," she said, laying her hand on the girl's arm.

Miss Winthrop smiled. "You should thank your brother," she said. "He has my gratitude too for enabling me to show off the new gown I had made expressly to wear to-night."

"You mean for enabling you to exhibit a stock of pride bigger than your pretty self," thought Francis. What he said aloud was: "Both of you had better reserve your thanks until the dance is over. I may disgrace you by tripping over this precious sword and falling headlong."

Mrs. Westlake laughed. "For goodness' sake, don't do that, Frank," she exclaimed; "you would make yourself too ridiculous."

Although she could not help loving him, her brother was a trial to Mrs. Westlake, and she had been secretly uneasy over his presence at her dance. There were people in the house who would never recognize him, and she had dreaded the introductions she might be called upon to make. But fortunately for her, Francis had asked her to present him to no one, but had roamed about by himself.

The quadrille came to an end with a triumphant flourish of the fiddle, and the dancers courtesied and separated in couples.

"Your dance comes next," Mrs. Westlake said.

As the old colored man began the slow, quaint music of the minuet Francis gave his arm to his partner, and together they moved to the centre of the open space before the fire.

When Margaret saw the bending of heads and craning of necks as a stir went through the crowd, and those farthest away leaned forward, the hand on Bellamy's arm stiffened a moment, then relaxed.

The dance was a slow, graceful one. There was no chance for Margaret to relieve the tension of her feelings by quick motion; every movement must be steady, every gesture calm.

No sound could be heard save an occasional rustle of silk as the two figures moved forward and back in the firelight that danced on polished floor and tapestried walls. Now the silver on the sideboard gleamed; now the scabbard of Bellamy's sword became a flaming blade: one moment Margaret's brown hair was turned to gold; a second later she courtesied in the heart of a red patch of wavering light.

Francis went through the dance with the grace and self-possession he lent to everything he did. He had had no fears for himself; he was aware of his good looks and he knew that he danced well, but he had been somewhat afraid that his partner's inward nervousness might make her awkward.

He need have had no anxiety. Margaret danced with the noise of the sea in her ears, and the gayly-clad forms on all sides of her were a many-colored blur, but she danced with the ease, the grace, the dignity of a princess.

For the most part her face was grave, but each time their hands met she gave Francis a slow, charming smile, and towards the end of the dance she infused into her manner a trace of dainty, old-fashioned coquetry that lent an added charm to her dignity and grace.

The watchers drew a long breath as the music stopped and Francis bent low over the hand he held, then stood erect and gave his arm to his partner. As the pair went back into the crowd someone near the door started to applaud, and a moment later the room echoed to the clapping of hands. Wondering whether she meant to acknowledge this applause,

Bellamy turned to Margaret; she evidently divined his thought, for she said coldly,—

“Do they think they are in a theatre?”

Just inside the door-way leading to the hall the two were met by a tall woman in black velvet, whose face was pale with anger.

“We shall go home at once,” this personage said to Margaret, ignoring Francis, whom the girl was about to introduce. “Get your wraps as quickly as you can.”

Margaret took her hand from Bellamy’s arm. “Pray excuse me,” she said, and went away with the other, leaving Francis looking after them with an amused face.

“That is her mother,” he thought, “and she’s in a towering rage because the girl danced with me. I’m glad I’m not Miss Margaret during her drive home. I wonder if the worthy dame has it in for Alice too. I think I’ll stroll out to the hall and see the end of this tragic comedy.”

Mrs. Winthrop made her adieux to her hostess in an icy tone.

“Yes, Alice is in for a bad quarter of an hour,” muttered Bellamy to himself as he made his way up to the smoking-room.

III.

FRANCIS was not far wrong in his conjecture that Margaret’s drive home would not be an enjoyable one. The carriage had scarcely started when Mrs. Winthrop said,—

“Margaret, do you so enjoy the conspicuous position you are in that you try to make it worse?”

“I don’t think I have made it worse,” Margaret replied calmly.

Mrs. Winthrop began again. “I fail to see how you could so far forget your position as a Winthrop as to go through a fancy dance with a man of Francis Bellamy’s stamp.”

Margaret leaned back in her seat and watched the lights flash past the carriage. “What has Mr. Bellamy done?” she asked curiously. “I never heard of him except as a brother of Mrs. Westlake’s who spent most of his time in remote corners of the earth.”

“He has done everything that he ought not to have done, and he is everything that he ought not to be,” rejoined Mrs. Winthrop, sure that her reply would bring Margaret to a proper realization of her folly, for the girl had always resolutely refused to have anything to do with men who did not come up to her standard of what a man should be. Her mother was, therefore, astonished when Margaret merely said in response,—

“He is very good-looking.”

Mrs. Winthrop sank back in her seat with something like a gasp. “Well,” she remarked in an acid voice, “the thing is done and it can’t

be undone, but I am sure I don't know what your father will say when I tell him about it."

Although the crowd in the lower rooms of Mrs. Westlake's house had thinned out considerably, Bellamy found the little Turkish apartment on the top floor filled with men. The host pushed a box of cigars towards him as he entered, but Francis shook his head, and walking over to the mantel stood leaning against it.

His coming had put every other man in the room at a disadvantage, perhaps because he showed no consciousness of his unusual dress. The others, now that they were alone together, looked as though they secretly felt ashamed of themselves: each had the apologetic air of a trick-animal dressed in grotesque clothes.

"You quite distinguished yourself to-night, Frank," observed Bellamy's brother-in-law.

Mr. Westlake was a handsome man, with something in his manner which commanded the respect of everyone he met: even Bellamy admired him. Now he turned to his host and bestowed on him one of the smiles he usually kept for women as he answered:

"Miss Winthrop deserves the credit, I think. She not only danced gracefully, but she entered into the spirit of the thing. Her charming little half-shy, half-coquettish airs were very fetching, and if I were an eighteenth-century gallant instead of a nineteenth-century reprobate, I should have fallen in love with her."

"It's lucky for her you didn't," observed a man at the other side of the fireplace with a short laugh. He was one of the few men there who knew Bellamy or cared to know him.

Francis laughed too. "I'm not so sure of that," he said. "I shouldn't treat her as Somers did; she's too pretty to run away from."

"It is a mystery to me," remarked one of a group who sat at a table playing cards, "why Miss Winthrop's brother didn't thrash Somers."

"He couldn't find him," answered Stanton, who was the last speaker's partner. "Somers and Violet have dropped out of sight and there's no way of locating them. Jack tried, I know, because I helped him in the search, but he couldn't get even a clue to where they went from Southampton. The police are after him too."

"Well, Violet Dare is a fine-looking woman and a jolly companion—as long as a man's money holds out," said Francis in the assured manner of one who knows whereof he speaks. "This Margaret Winthrop is a pretty girl too," he went on. The group at the other side of the fireplace were in the midst of a noisy argument, and Francis was obliged to raise his voice to make himself heard. "I was quite taken with her, I tell you. I was just trying to devise some way of luring her into the conservatory where I could steal a kiss when——"

Stanton's right-hand opponent sprang to his feet, with such haste

that his chair overturned, and confronted Francis with a white face and blazing eyes.

"How dare you talk of Miss Winthrop in that light way?" he cried hotly. "She is not a woman to be kissed on mere acquaintance."

The speaker was a young fellow of twenty-two or three, with light hair that curled slightly and a clean-shaven, earnest countenance, in strong contrast with Bellamy's older, sneering face.

Francis smiled at him in a kindly, indulgent fashion.

"My dear boy," he said, "you never know what you can do with women until you try."

The young man took a step forward and his right hand clenched. "How dare you?" he cried again. "How dare you? You insult Miss Winthrop when you speak her name."

Those in the room who knew Bellamy's quick temper scarcely breathed for a moment, but Francis did not grow angry. He still smiled as he answered soothingly, as one speaks to a child not old enough to be reasoned with or a woman not sensible enough.

"Come, come," he said; "don't glare at me like a wild animal. This is not a matter to quarrel about. I never quarrel about women, anyway: they're not worth it."

"Well, you shall quarrel about this," retorted Hatfield; "you shall retract what you said."

"What did I say?" inquired Francis coolly. "Merely that I wanted to kiss the girl, but that—if you had allowed me to finish—her indignant mamma flounced up and carried her off before I had a chance to try."

"Your next speech insinuated all sorts of things," was Hatfield's response, "and now you are trying to sneak out of the consequences of it because you see plainly"—here the speaker glanced at the circle of darkening faces gathered around them—"that every man here is willing to fight for Miss Winthrop."

At this implication of cowardice Bellamy's face became like a thunder-cloud. "So I am trying to crawl, am I?" he said. "Well, since you object to insinuations that prove nothing, I'll give you something better, and also give the woman you are defending so blunderingly a chance to convince me she is all you say she is." Francis paused a moment to look from Hatfield round the circle, then continued: "I'll wager a thousand dollars to anyone's five that before a month goes by I shall have kissed this Margaret Winthrop with her consent."

Angry murmurs and expostulations broke out among the spectators, and Mr. Westlake came forward and laid a hand on his brother-in-law's arm.

"This won't do, Frank," he said. "You go too far, even for you, from whom we have learned to expect little. I won't have any such

wager made in my house. And you, Hatfield, are too impulsive. You should remember that it never does a woman's reputation any good to make her the subject of a quarrel. We all know what Miss Winthrop is and——"

"Yes, we all know what she is," broke in Hatfield; "her purity, her goodness, are beyond question. That is why I could not stand by and hear her insulted by a man like him. Isn't even Miss Winthrop to be safe from his sneers?"

"I have just offered you an opportunity to let the lady in question win my good opinion for herself," observed Francis. His anger had passed and he was smiling once more, a calm smile that maddened young Hatfield. "Why don't you take my wager?" Francis added.

"And have you win it and defame her still further—by lying?"

"No." Bellamy's lips had whitened a little, though he still smiled.

"I never lie; Westlake here will tell you that."

"Is that so?" asked the boy, turning to his host.

"Yes, it is so," the older man answered, "but I tell you I will not have such a wager made in my house. Hatfield, I say again you are showing more heart than head in this affair, and as for you, Frank, you ought to be ashamed of yourself to taunt the boy and carry your love of teasing so far as to trifle with the name of a good woman."

"Since Mr. Westlake assures me you will speak the truth," said Hatfield, who had by this time grown calmer, "I will take your wager, sir, without odds. A thousand dollars is all I have in the world, but I'll risk it willingly."

"Harry, I know your motive is a good one, but you are doing a very foolish thing," interposed Stanton kindly.

A murmur of assent to this speech went round the circle. There was not a man there who did not like Hatfield and pity him because his boyish, absorbing love for Margaret was hopeless.

"If Miss Winthrop could know the circumstances, I think she would choose to have me do just as I have done." Hatfield spoke quietly, but with a conviction that silenced further argument.

A pause followed his speech, during which the circle broke into smaller groups and Francis moved towards the door.

"I think I will go," he said to Westlake. "Good-night, Jim. As the ladies say, 'I've had a delightful evening!'"

"Good-night," returned his host. "It is a pity you can enjoy yourself only when you are causing someone else pain and humiliation, and until you change in this respect my doors are no longer open to you."

If Francis felt any shame at his brother-in-law's dismissal, he kept that shame carefully concealed. He continued his journey to the door, saying: "As you please, of course. 'Every man's house is his castle.'"

At the threshold Bellamy turned to look back into the room, his

handsome face and satin-clad figure, framed in by the door-way, making a picture well worth looking at.

"Good-night, gentlemen," he said, and waited a moment, but no response came. Nothing daunted, Francis turned again and went out, and a second later those in the room heard him apologize to Jack Winthrop, whom he ran against just outside the door.

Jack came in humming an air from an opera, but the song died on his lips as he noted the overturned chair, the flushed face of young Hatfield, the stern look Mr. Westlake wore, and the suppressed excitement in the faces of the other men.

"What's the matter?" he asked as his glance fell on the deserted card table with the half-played hands thrown on it face upward. "Has Bellamy been cheating at cards?"

As Jack received no answer to his question, he assumed that his surmise was correct and that his host did not wish the matter talked about.

IV.

At dawn on the following morning Francis found himself on Riverside Drive. He had been drinking heavily all night, but the fresh, cool air from the river sobered him; he knew where he was, although he could not remember how he came to be there. He walked on through the mist with no object in view further than to enjoy the breeze that blew against his hot forehead.

He met no one. Walk, cycle-path, and driveway were all deserted, and it was not until he was well up towards Grant's Tomb that Francis came suddenly upon the solitary figure of a woman seated on a bench.

He did not see her until he was so close to her that she seemed to rise out of the mist like a phantom; nor was she less surprised at sight of him.

The two recognized each other at once, although Bellamy wore conventional evening clothes and Margaret had changed her ball-gown for one of simple black. She had discarded also her mask of pride; her face was white and drawn, her eyes were red from crying, and her whole attitude breathed disconsolate woe. When a quick sob burst from her Francis said roughly,—

"Don't cry for him; he isn't worth it."

"I'm not crying for him," she retorted scornfully; "I'm crying for the faith in my fellow-men he has robbed me of."

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Francis. "Because one man has shown himself despicable doesn't prove that all men are like him. There are men who deserve to be believed in; if I can think that, surely you can. Just now you feel crushed and sorely hurt, but time will help all that, and by and by you'll get back your trust again."

"Never!" cried his companion. "Never will I believe in any man

again. I'll fight with the whole force of my nature against allowing myself to do so. It isn't fair," she went on, "it isn't just, that such men should be given power to make women believe in them and trust them. I thought Jack Somers——"

"You thought him perfect," interrupted Francis; "you idealized him."

"I did not idealize him," Margaret retorted fiercely, "nor did I think him perfect, but I did believe that he longed and tried to fulfil my ideal. He said I was like an angel of light to him, that I seemed always to inspire him to better things. And I—I tried to help him, to make myself worthy to help him. I told him my hopes for him, my plans in regard to the life we should lead: how we would strive to live up to the best that was in us, to be high-minded and noble. I showed him my very soul," the girl cried passionately, "and he seemed to understand me as no one ever had before. He promised—oh, he promised everything."

"And he probably meant to keep his promises—until Violet Dare got hold of him." Francis added the last words in an undertone, but Margaret caught them.

"I don't mind that part so much," she said,—"his going away with her. It's the thought that the man I believed in so implicitly could be capable of dishonesty."

Francis looked towards the river through the lightening grayness. When he spoke it was not to answer her last words.

"As we are upon this subject," he said, "I think I will take this opportunity to congratulate you on the way you carried yourself last night. Your pluck won the admiration of everyone, and I heard your praises spoken on all sides."

"Yes, they were all watching me and wondering how I had courage to be there at all," Margaret replied bitterly. "Why should I hide my head because a worthless lover has deserted me, when I should, rather, be glad that I escaped marriage with him? And I am glad; I regret nothing save the loss of my faith in human nature."

"But all men are not capable of acting as Somers did," ejaculated Francis.

"Perhaps not, but how is one to discriminate, since even the vilest of them assume virtue for the sake of standing well in the eyes of the woman they care for. And they tell you that all the good in them is due to your influence. Well, no one shall ever say that to me again; no one will have power to make me suffer as I have suffered, as I am suffering. Never, as long as I live, will I lift a finger to influence any man."

In her excitement Margaret had risen to her feet. "She is superb," Francis thought; aloud he said lightly:

"Now you challenge my doubt. A good woman with no predilection for reforming men is an anomaly I do not believe exists."

Bellamy's bantering tone seemed to bring to Margaret a realization of the fact that she had forgotten her pride and shared her deepest feelings with one who was almost a stranger, and she instantly retreated behind a barrier of reserve.

"I beg your pardon," she said with quiet dignity, "for boring you with my troubles, or perhaps"—here pride got the better of dignity—"I have amused you."

"No," Bellamy answered, "you have interested me."

Margaret held out her hand. "I must go now," she said, "back to the life that seems robbed of all its zest, but first I want to thank you for understanding—for helping me to show my friends that I could bear their whispered curiosity, their sudden silences when I approached, and even their looks of pity without flinching."

Francis had not taken the hand she offered him; now as she stopped speaking he stepped back. "No," he said, "I will not treat you as Somers did. I'm not fit to touch your hand, and I won't."

After Margaret had gone away Bellamy sat down on the bench she had left, ashamed of his speech. "I couldn't have been more melodramatic if I'd been acting the part of a villain in a play," he muttered to himself as he rose, and, going to the wall that borders the Drive on the west, looked out over the gray water which the rays of the sun, just risen in the east, had not yet touched.

"In God's name, why was I chosen to see the anguish of that woman's soul?" he cried aloud.

V.

UPON reaching home Margaret found the other members of the family at breakfast. There were no comments on her late appearance or the fact that she had chosen to go for a walk so early. Since her trouble she had come and gone as she pleased, and apparently no notice was taken of her movements.

Her relatives were a little afraid of Margaret in these days, she was so changed. From a happy young girl with a nature that was bright and sunny she had become a proud, cold woman, with a woman's capacity for suffering and a woman's power to hide her pain.

A few moments after Margaret had taken her place at the table Mrs. Winthrop said to her husband, "Do you remember my telling you that Margaret was to dance a minuet last night with—with Somers?"

As she spoke the name Mrs. Winthrop cast a furtive glance at her daughter, but the girl's expression did not change.

"Why, yes, I think I do," Mr. Winthrop answered vaguely.

"Wasn't that why you asked me for money for a new gown in addition to all her wedding finery?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Winthrop somewhat impatiently. "Well, Margaret danced that minuet, and whom do you suppose she danced it with?"

"I don't know, I'm sure."

"Francis Bellamy," announced Mrs. Winthrop with the manner of a person who expects to create a sensation.

"My dear!" ejaculated Margaret's father; "not James Westlake's brother-in-law?"

Mrs. Winthrop nodded her head and leaned back in her chair, satisfied with the effect of her news. "John," she said, "I wish you would speak to Margaret. Tell her what you know about Francis Bellamy, and request her to avoid him in future."

Mr. Winthrop rose and went to his daughter's side. "My dear," he said, with a hand on her shoulder, "I know nothing good of Bellamy, and you must have as little as possible to say to him."

"Out of regard for his sister and Mr. Westlake people do not cut him altogether," put in Mrs. Winthrop, "but everyone avoids him."

"Avoids whom?" asked Margaret's brother Jack, coming in at this moment.

"Francis Bellamy," answered his mother.

"I should say they did," Jack asserted; "even the men fight shy of him. Last night I ran against him coming out of the smoking-room. He had evidently been cheating at cards."

"Did you see your sister dancing a minuet with him?" inquired Mrs. Winthrop, unwilling to lose a chance to repeat her sensation.

"Madge dancing with Francis Bellamy!" cried Jack. "But then," he added, "I suppose she did not know— No, I was playing billiards, and did not go downstairs for those old-fashioned dances."

"Well, Margaret danced a minuet with him in the dining-room with Mrs. Westlake's guests looking on, and I suppose this morning people are talking of nothing else. Not for worlds would I have had Margaret add to the notoriety that other affair has given her. Oh, I wish that wretched Somers had gone away before the wedding-day was quite so near."

"So do I," echoed Mr. Winthrop fervently.

Margaret hurried out of the room to hide her tears. She knew that the elaborate preparations for her marriage had almost beggared her father. It had been her mother's doing, for Margaret would have been quite content with a simple wedding, but now she felt, none the less, that she had robbed her family, and she shed bitter tears over her costly trousseau. Her heart ached with regret that so much of her father's scanty money had been thrown away. Margaret's affection for her

mother was dictated in a measure by duty, but her father she could not have helped loving.

To her surprise, Margaret found that to avoid Francis was not to be an easy matter, for that young man suddenly took to frequenting the haunts of the fashionable world, and neglected no opportunity to be by her side.

When she went with her mother to call upon Mrs. Westlake, shortly after the latter's dance, Mrs. Westlake's handsome brother was lounging in the drawing-room.

His listlessness vanished at their entrance, and as soon as Mrs. Westlake came into the room he took a chair by Margaret's side, leaving his sister to entertain the irate Mrs. Winthrop, who was by his presence prevented from speaking her mind to her hostess on the subject of the minuet Margaret and Bellamy had danced together.

Margaret saw that Bellamy divined her mother's dislike and disapproval of him, and that this was why he took pains, when the conversation became general, to make himself agreeable to Mrs. Winthrop.

The girl smiled bitterly when she learned that Bellamy's exertion of his charm had not been without effect. After they had left the house Mrs. Winthrop remarked,—

"It is a pity that brother of Mrs. Westlake's is such a black sheep; he is really a delightful man to talk with."

Margaret thought of her former lover. That such charm of manner as both these men possessed could exist in the utter absence of moral worth seemed to her at this time one of the saddest problems ethics had to offer.

Whenever he encountered Margaret, Bellamy contrived to find out what her engagements were for the next few days, and in this way he managed to see her often. Had not her mind been so full of her trouble she would have discerned that these meetings were not due wholly to chance, but just at that time she felt her unfortunate position too keenly to think of anything else.

VI.

ONE afternoon, shortly after the call upon Mrs. Westlake, Bellamy's card was brought to Margaret. She stood for some moments with the piece of pasteboard in her hand, considering what to do; her mother being out, there was no one to go to for advice.

Margaret disliked to refuse curtly to see him, and yet, if she merely sent down her excuses, might not the call be repeated? She decided to see Bellamy and let him understand that she considered his visit an intrusion. And an intrusion she did consider it. How had he dared to come uninvited? she asked herself as she descended the stairs.

Francis laid down the bit of carved ivory he had been examining and came forward as she entered the drawing-room.

"I suppose you wonder at my presumption in daring to invade your home," he said, smiling.

There was no trace in his bearing of the gentleness he had shown on the night of his sister's dance or during the interview on Riverside Drive; now both face and manner reflected the man's careless, conscienceless nature.

As she looked at him Margaret's dignity became hauteur.

"Since you have invaded it, will you tell me why?" she asked.

Francis smiled, whether at her displeasure or his own thoughts she could not tell, and, stepping back a little to watch the effect of his words, said coolly:

"I came to ask you to marry me. Oh, I expected you would be surprised," he went on in the same tone, "but if you will sit down and let me talk to you a few moments, I think I can convince you that my plan isn't half a bad one."

Without replying, Margaret took the chair he drew forward for her. She was for the moment too startled even to feel anger.

"Upon first thoughts," Francis began, seating himself near her, "there may not seem to be any reasons why you should marry me; but have you considered what you are to do with the rest of your life? No, don't speak yet," as Margaret was about to utter an angry rejoinder. "You were going to tell me, I have no doubt, that this is not my affair, but your reproaches will keep until I've said what I came to say. If you belonged in a different social sphere, you might forget your trouble in work, but I suppose your long line of grandparents would turn in their graves at the thought, so there isn't anything left for you except a brilliant social career or a life devoted to charity. I understand you well enough to know that you must find something to occupy your mind, and that before long, or one of the retreats will have a new inmate."

"Oh, you are right," cried Margaret with a white face. "I must stop thinking or I shall go mad."

"And it wouldn't suit your pride, would it, to have the world believe that Somers's desertion had turned your brain?"

"No, no," moaned Margaret. His words were so true that she could not resent their brutality.

"Well," continued Francis, "charitable work will never wholly engross your thoughts, and a brilliant social career takes money."

"All that you say is true," replied Margaret, who had recovered her composure, "but I fail to see why, after having been placed in a most pitiable position by a faithless lover, I should make matters worse by marrying a worthless husband."

Francis seemed to find her frankness amusing.

"Might not a worthless husband who would let you do as you please be better than a worthy mother who——"

"How dare you!" cried Margaret.

Bellamy put out a hand, as though to soothe her. "I was going to stop anyway," he said. "There was no need for me to finish the sentence. In spite of your very proper indignation, what I began to say is echoed in your heart."

"Mr. Bellamy," said Margaret quickly, "your impertinence is beyond pardon. Your motive in making this astounding proposition may have been a kind one; you have shown me on former occasions a good deal of consideration, and I am ready to believe that you mean to be kind now. But you have said enough. No inducement you could offer would make me consent to marry you, and I must ask you to remember that my unfortunate plight does not put me quite at your mercy. I have a father and a brother who would punish your audacity if I told them of it." As she stopped speaking Margaret moved towards the door.

"Miss Winthrop, do you know that your father is on the verge of failure?" Bellamy inquired.

Margaret sat down again, pale and trembling. "You must be mistaken," she whispered.

"Ask him," said Bellamy shortly.

Nothing more was said for some moments, during which Margaret stared at the wall with unseeing eyes and Bellamy watched her.

"The magnificent wedding you were to have is doubtless the cause of the smash, which I assure you is not far off," Bellamy broke the silence by saying pitilessly. "The money he spent on preparations for that would have tided him over all right, but now nothing can save him except a large loan. This is why I flattered myself you would agree to marry me. If you do, I shall settle half my fortune, which is not a small one, upon you at once, thereby enabling you to lend your father the money he needs; or you can give it to him, as you prefer."

Margaret appeared to be thinking deeply while she listened; when Francis had finished she turned her gray eyes upon him and said:

"Mr. Bellamy, you have been frank in giving me what you consider good reasons for my agreeing to marry you. Will you be equally frank in telling me why you want to marry me?"

"I will, with pleasure," replied Francis, smiling. "In the first place, I want to please my sister. Like most people without a pedigree, she worships 'family.' Then too she is anxious to see me safely married because she fears I may be entrapped into a union with some designing, undesirable person. And I'm not sure that her fears are groundless," Francis went on. "In my sober senses I defy anybody to

entrap me, but then, you see, I'm not always sober. Reason second: I do not like living in apartments. I want a house in town, with plenty of room to be comfortable, and a place in the country to which I can invite my friends to hunt and fish with me. To keep these houses up properly I need, well, something between a wife and a housekeeper, a person who will not interfere with me in any way, and yet will look after my interests."

"And in return for these services you would give——" queried Margaret.

"Half my fortune and absolute freedom," returned Bellamy. "I should not trouble you at all; in fact, you need seldom see me. You are right in the belief I see you entertain that my offer is not prompted by any feeling for you personally. To be quite outspoken with you, we are equally indifferent."

"Then why have you chosen me——" began Margaret.

"Because," interrupted Francis, "you declared so emphatically that morning on Riverside Drive that never again would you try to influence any man. Now, while I wish for my sister's sake to marry a good woman, I do not want to run any risk of tying myself to one who will try to reform me. I want a wife who will let me severely alone."

Margaret listened like a woman in a dream, her mind dwelling alternately on her burdened father and the useless wedding finery laid away upstairs. It was Francis who took up the conversation again.

"You see, there are advantages on both sides," he said. "I have had the matter in my mind some days and have thought it over carefully. We could be married on the first of June."

Margaret started. "The first of June!" she faltered. "Why, that is——"

"Yes, I know. It is the day you were to have married Somers. That is why I suggested it. Why not give that prodigious pride of yours a chance to flaunt itself by having your wedding just as you intended, but with me as the bridegroom instead of Somers? I am quite as good-looking as he, and will be as much of an ornament to the occasion. Now isn't my plan a good one?" ended Francis, leaning back in his chair with the air of a person who feels that his arguments are unanswerable. "If you consent to it, your family will be saved from—well, something approaching poverty; you will have a home of your own, plenty of money, and freedom from a tyrannical—pardon, I forgot; your trousseau won't be wasted, and your friends will be so electrified that they will forget to pity you. Miss Winthrop, I ask you again, will you marry me?"

"Yes," replied Margaret, "I will."

Bellamy rose. "If I were in your place," he said, "I should make that wedding an elaborate affair. I rather like fuss and ceremony my-

self, and if the church survives the shock of my presence, everything ought to go off smoothly. If you need to consult me, send a line to the Bachelors' Club."

Margaret smiled faintly; she was looking wan and tired.

"I am afraid I may have to trouble you," she said. "There will be a good many details to arrange."

"Yes," responded Francis. "We want the affair to run smoothly. I hope it will be as much of a success as our first appearance in public."

Bellamy had started for the door, but he came back now and looked down at Margaret. "Miss Winthrop," he said, and his voice reminded the girl of the morning on Riverside Drive, "I haven't any idea that we shall be very great friends; there isn't any necessity for that; but then, on the other hand, there isn't any reason why we should be enemies."

Margaret rose and came towards him with her hand out.

"I believe you mean to be kind to me, Mr. Bellamy, and I thank you," she said.

Francis looked at the hand she offered him, but did not take it, and the gentleness vanished from his manner, leaving him his accustomed mocking self.

"I wonder what your mother will say," he remarked with a laugh as he turned towards the door again.

As if in answer to his words the peal of a bell was heard, followed by a rustle of silk, and a moment later Mrs. Winthrop entered the room.

"James told me I should find you here, Margaret," she was beginning, when her eyes fell upon Bellamy.

At sight of him Mrs. Winthrop drew herself erect, and going to the wall pressed an electric bell, presumably to summon a servant to show him out, after which she faced Francis again.

"Mr. Bellamy," she said in tones that would have chilled the blood of anyone less indifferent to other people's opinions and with the manner, had she but known it, of a burlesque tragedy queen, "may I ask why you are here?"

Francis did not attempt to conceal his amusement, but smiled broadly as he answered with elaborate politeness:

"You may ask and I will answer. I came, Mrs. Winthrop, to request your daughter to marry me, and she has done me the honor to promise to do so."

With these words Francis went swiftly out, without waiting for the servant to escort him.

VII.

AFTER Bellamy's departure Mrs. Winthrop sank weakly into a chair. "Margaret!" she cried, "was the man intoxicated?"

"No, I think not," answered the girl, smiling in spite of the fact

that her heart ached miserably. "It is true, mother," she went on; "I am going to marry Mr. Bellamy on the first of June."

"You must be mad. Or am I dreaming?" Mrs. Winthrop put a trembling hand to her head. "My brain seems dazed, and I can't make myself realize that your words are true. Why, you have scarcely met the man a dozen times. I have tried to make you understand that Francis Bellamy is not a fit man for you to make a friend of, and now you tell me you are going to marry him. And on the very day too you were to have wedded a man who is almost as great a rascal."

"A greater one," retorted Margaret quickly. "At least, Mr. Bellamy does not pretend to be other than he is."

"Margaret," cried her mother, "you will be the talk of the town!"

"Am I not that already?" queried Margaret.

"Yes. And I have seen you writhe under the pitying looks of your friends. How much greater will that pity be if you marry a man who is despised by everyone."

If these words stung Margaret, she did not show her hurt. "Mr. Bellamy says my friends will be so electrified at the news of my marriage that they will forget to pity me," she said calmly, "and I think he is right."

"No one will come to the wedding or receive you afterwards," declared Mrs. Winthrop.

"On the contrary, my friends will come in droves to see me married," returned her daughter. "As to their receiving me afterwards, I think you are mistaken also," the girl went on; "you see, I am going to marry a wealthy man."

After waiting a moment for her mother to speak, Margaret continued in another tone: "Why should you be so distressed, mother? You have always wanted me to marry money. You objected to Jack Somers because he was not rich enough."

Mrs. Winthrop's eyes filled with tears. "Margaret," she said, "I did wish you to marry money: I wish it still. I have lived long enough to know that while money may not bring happiness, neither is happiness likely to be secured without it. I may sometimes have urged you to marry without love, but I would rather see you in poverty all your days than married to a man you cannot respect."

Margaret crossed the room and laid her hand on Mrs. Winthrop's shoulder. She felt that until now she had misjudged her mother.

"I am afraid I shall never marry if I wait to meet someone I could respect," she said sadly. "I shall never believe in anyone again. Men are all alike, mother, except that some of them haven't been found out."

"Margaret, Margaret!" sobbed Mrs. Winthrop. "How that man's perfidy has changed you."

"Yes, it has," replied Margaret in her proud way. "Listen,

mother," she added; "happiness of the kind that comes through marriage is out of the question for me. And yet I cannot go on living my old life as though all this had never happened. Life is never the same to any woman who has been so near her wedding-day only to have her trust wrecked as mine has been. The woman whose lover dies has a sweet and tender memory to brighten her lonely life, but I—I haven't even that. Can't you see that it is better for me to go away and begin a new life, a busy existence that will bring me contentment, though not happiness?"

"But, Margaret," protested her mother, "the peaceful existence you describe will be out of the question with a husband like Francis Bellamy. I understand he leads the wildest kind of a life—drinks, gambles, is dissipated in every way. He will be unkind to you; he will make you wretched."

"I do not believe he will be unkind to me," returned Margaret, "and it is not in his power to make me wretched. He is going to settle half his fortune on me, so I shall be independent of him financially, and my sole duty as a wife will be to see that the houses he intends to purchase are properly kept up. You see," concluded Margaret, "there is not much use in trying to move me; I am quite determined to marry Mr. Bellamy. My strongest reason for doing so I haven't told you yet. Have you noticed how ill father has looked lately?"

"Yes," replied Mrs. Winthrop, "I have."

"I learned to-day that he is on the verge of failure. Now you see why I dwelt on the fact that I am to marry a rich man. If father fails, he will never get over it; he is too old to begin again."

"Then must I choose between sacrificing my husband and sacrificing my child?" exclaimed poor Mrs. Winthrop.

"You will not be sacrificing me," was Margaret's rejoinder. "My marriage will save father, and I shall be quite as happy as I am now; at least, I cannot be more unhappy, and it will comfort me to feel that if I have brought notoriety to those I love, I have also saved them from poverty."

"Your father will never consent to have us saved at such a cost," cried Margaret's mother.

"He must not know," replied the girl. "Leave father to me, mother; I can convince him that what I am about to do is best for me, and that will satisfy him."

Margaret was right in thinking that her father's opposition would not be difficult to overcome. Although he was deeply shocked and pained upon hearing that she was resolved to marry Bellamy, Mr. Winthrop did not try very hard to dissuade her from her purpose.

"Perhaps you know best, my daughter," he said sadly. "You have been through a great sorrow, a sorrow none of us could share with you,

and I feel that you should be allowed your own way in planning your future life. Although we may pity, we cannot blame the drowning man who catches at a straw. But with love or without it, marriage is a very serious compact, and I hope you are making no mistake."

"I believe I am not," Margaret answered, and left her father's presence feeling that her news had caused him greater sorrow than he told her of. She saw too that he was brooding over his impending failure and she longed to put an end to his anxiety, but dared not just yet. He must not be allowed to suspect that the desire to help him had shaped her course.

Margaret found her brother the hardest member of the family to deal with. Jack declared emphatically that he would stop at nothing to break Margaret's engagement, and to talk him over to her way of thinking was a task that required patience.

The engagement was several days old when a note came from Bellamy asking his fiancée to meet him at the office of his lawyer. After this the strange pair met frequently to arrange the details of their marriage. In order that the wedding-gown of white satin Margaret already had might be utilized, an evening wedding was decided upon and the time of the ceremony set for eight o'clock.

"How many bridesmaids will you have?" inquired Bellamy on one occasion. He showed a good deal of interest in the affair, and having witnessed weddings in many foreign countries, was able to offer some suggestions for quaint, unusual effects in the evening's entertainment which Mrs. Winthrop, intent upon making Margaret's marriage, since she was powerless to prevent it, the social event of the year, seized upon with alacrity.

"None," replied Margaret in answer to Bellamy's question, "but my cousin Joyce Darlington will be maid-of-honor. That reminds me, I want to ask you about your best man. And also, will you give me a list of the people to whom you wish invitations sent?"

Bellamy frowned. "I don't believe I have any friends your mother would care to see in her house," he said, "so you need not consider me in making out your lists. I don't know anyone I want to ask to be best man, either. Couldn't your brother Jack officiate?"

Jack's anger was roused again when he was asked to be Bellamy's groomsman. "It will look as though we all wanted to lend a hand in sacrificing Madge," he growled, but finally consented, because he feared that if he refused Francis might bring forward some objectionable person to take his place.

At Bellamy's suggestion the engagement was not announced. "As we want to startle your friends," he said to Margaret, "why not insure them a good shock by letting them hear of our marriage for the first time when they read the wedding-cards?"

VIII.

MRS. WESTLAKE'S carriage rolled away, and her husband went back to the library and the book and easy-chair he had left. Mr. Westlake loved solitude and study, and Mrs. Westlake, unlike most young wives with social aspirations, did not drag him about with her except on occasions when his absence could not be excused.

On this evening he had scarcely settled himself comfortably when his brother-in-law was shown into the room. The two men had not met since the night of Mrs. Westlake's dance, but Francis greeted the older man as though they had parted the best of friends.

"Good-evening, Jim," he said genially.

"Frank," replied his brother-in-law, "I thought I told you——"

"You did," interrupted Bellamy. "You told me, very dramatically and with the dignity that is so becoming to you, not to darken your doors again. I haven't been here but once since, and my errand to-night will, I think, excuse my presence."

Mr. Westlake listened with a grave face. His voice when he spoke was stern, but there lurked in it a note which told that he regretted the necessity for the sternness. Before his marriage he and Bellamy had hunted together in the West, and he had found the man who was so discreditable a member of civilized society a most trustworthy companion in the solitude of the forest.

"Sit down, Frank," he said, "and tell me what you came for. And be straightforward about it; don't talk so much nonsense."

Bellamy took a chair, an easy one. "To-morrow night is the time set for the payment of that wager," he remarked.

Mr. Westlake's face darkened. "Well?" he said.

"I came to ask you to write notes to the men who heard the wager made, asking them to come here and see the finish of the affair."

This speech seemed to leave Mr. Westlake with no words to say, but his face, as he rose to his feet and gazed down at his brother-in-law, was expressive.

"Don't look at me like that," cried Francis, laughing and putting up a protesting hand; "you make me feel the size of your little finger."

Bellamy's host went slowly back to his seat. "You must be mad to make such a request," he said. "As you did not choose to respect my wishes, I was powerless to prevent the making of that wager, but do you suppose I shall have anything further to do with it? I don't know how you intend to get out of it; I know you too well to hope you will do what is right, but I tell you this—if you drag that girl's name in the dust by any trickery, I'll tell Jack Winthrop, and he'll thrash you within an inch of your life. I can't do it myself because of Alice."

Francis laughed, a laugh of genuine amusement, and going over to

the fireplace leaned nonchalantly against the mantel. "I scarcely think Winthrop will thrash me," he said pleasantly. "In the first place, he's not big enough; in the second, it would not be in good taste for him to try, considering the fact that he is to be best man at my wedding."

"Best man!—at your wedding!" repeated Mr. Westlake. "You are going to be married?"

"I am going to marry Miss Margaret Winthrop."

Mr. Westlake sprang from his seat and faced his visitor. "Now I see through your infamous plan," he cried. "Knowing there was no chance of winning your wager by fair means, you have, by engaging yourself to that poor girl, obtained permission to kiss her, and after you have gratified your taste for amusement at someone else's expense, you intend to make Miss Winthrop's unfortunate position still worse by throwing her over."

"What a brain you have, to see so far ahead. You should have been a diplomat."

Bellamy's host controlled himself with difficulty; his hands worked convulsively and his voice was choked with passion. "Have you no manhood at all in you that you can think out such a devilish scheme?" he was beginning, when his anger burst all bounds. His efforts at self-restraint ceased, and he flew at the other's throat, exclaiming: "By God! you shall not do it. You make me forget that Alice loves you."

Westlake was a powerfully built man, and had been at one time a match for Bellamy, but since his marriage he had taken little active interest in athletics, and now Francis had no difficulty in shaking him off. This he did quickly, yet gently too, as if he did not wish to hurt him. When Westlake had released his hold Francis stepped back to his position by the mantel.

"Can you cash a check for a thousand dollars?" he asked calmly. "I wouldn't trouble you, but I shall be too busy to-morrow to go to the bank, and I'd rather give that Hatfield boy the money."

"You are going to pay that wager?" uttered Mr. Westlake incredulously.

"I am," answered Francis. "Can I not always be depended on to do the unexpected thing?" he added lightly.

In a mechanical fashion Mr. Westlake moved towards the safe at the other side of the room.

"You see now, Jim," Bellamy remarked after he had filled out a check at his brother-in-law's desk, "why I asked you to allow the wager to be settled here. For Miss Winthrop's sake I want all those men present, and you know they would not come to my rooms."

"What is to become of Miss Winthrop, with this affair on everybody's tongue?"

"As I told you before, she is going to marry me."

"In God's name, why?"

Francis shrugged his shoulders. "I have not asked her that," he said, smiling. "But do you think I'm such a bad match? I'm rich enough, surely, and I'm not ugly to look at."

"I think, of all the men I know, you are the one best fitted to make a woman's life miserable."

For a moment the smile left Bellamy's face. "I doubt if anyone could make Miss Winthrop more miserable than she is now," he said gravely. "How about those notes?" he added in another tone.

Mr. Westlake sat down at his desk. "I sometimes think, Frank," he said, "that you were put into the world for no other purpose than to give pain and annoyance to those unfortunate enough to come in contact with you. What shall I say to these men?"

"You might say," responded Francis, "'Mr. James Westlake presents his compliments to Mr. Robert Stanton, and requests his presence at a wager party.' Seriously, Jim, say what you like. You need not write to Hatfield; I will send him a note myself."

"You are the only person outside of Miss Winthrop's immediate family who knows of this engagement," Bellamy said an hour or so later when the notes were written and he had slipped them into his pocket to mail after he left the house. "We decided to keep it quiet until the invitations come out; we want to startle her friends. I wonder whether Alice will be pleased?"

"When is the wedding to be?" inquired Westlake.

"The first of June."

"What do Miss Winthrop's parents think of her engagement?" the older man asked as soon as he had recovered somewhat from the shock this announcement caused him.

"Well, they didn't exactly welcome me with open arms," confessed Francis, smiling, "but they are putting the best face possible upon what they cannot help. You see, Miss Winthrop has a will of her own, and she is determined to marry me."

"And after she has married you, what then?" questioned Mr. Westlake with the air of a judge. "How do you intend to treat her?"

Bellamy paused on his way to the door to answer, "I intend to let her severely alone."

"That will be the greatest kindness you can do her," replied Mr. Westlake.

"I realize that," said the other man. "Good-night."

IX.

It was a curious score of men who gathered in Mr. Westlake's smoking-room on the following night. They had supposed the affair of the wager would be hushed up, but when it was learned that it was

to be settled, and under the auspices of Mr. Westlake, wonder knew no bounds.

Francis arrived somewhat later than the appointed hour, but when he came he disposed of the matter with an abruptness different from his usual dramatic way of doing things; for once in his life he seemed to have no desire to create a sensation.

Nevertheless, the scene as he handed the money to Hatfield, while the other men stood watching the faces of the two apprehensively, was full of suppressed excitement. Any fears that the episode would end in a quarrel were soon relieved. Bellamy's manner was that of a man paying an ordinary debt, and he treated Hatfield with a calm politeness that was a challenge to equal courtesy.

"Have you anything to say?" the latter asked as he took the money.

"I think not," Francis answered. "You have won your wager, and I am paying it; it seems to me that on this occasion words are superfluous. Did we not waste them at our last meeting?"

"You did," returned Hatfield shortly.

At this the spectators breathed quickly, and Westlake took a step towards Bellamy as if to be ready to remonstrate with him, but Francis showed no signs of anger.

"As my part in the evening's entertainment has been performed, Jim," he said pleasantly, "I think I will take myself off." With these words Francis left the room, quickly, yet with no appearance of haste, not waiting to listen to Hatfield's declaration that he meant to give the money Bellamy had paid him to charity.

The following afternoon had been agreed upon for Bellamy to take his fiancée to look at a house he thought of purchasing. When Margaret came downstairs dressed for the drive, Francis told himself that in appearance, at least, his future wife was all he could have wished. As he took her wrap and led the way to the carriage Bellamy spoke his thought aloud, but his companion received the compliment with a gravity so entire that he wished the remark unsaid.

The house they were going to inspect was on Riverside Drive and, as the day was bright and warm, steady streams of carriages rolled along the roadways that run in either direction.

In the procession of equipages that clanked past them both Margaret and Bellamy saw familiar faces, but they seldom had occasion to speak to the same people. The carriages whose occupants greeted Bellamy were mostly showy turnouts with women inside whose eyes sought the girl at his side with glances that were either frankly or stealthily curious.

As they drew up before the house Margaret uttered an exclamation of mingled admiration and amazement. She knew that Bellamy was a wealthy man, but the splendor of her future home far exceeded her

anticipations. The house had been built by a well-known millionaire who was afterwards obliged to seek a dryer climate, Francis explained to her as they walked through the lofty rooms.

"Do you like it?" he asked when they had finished their tour of inspection and were once more in the large entrance-hall.

The girl at his side let her glance wander out through the open door and across the shining river to where the purple Palisades rose to meet a glorious sky. "It is beautiful," she said.

"I am going to leave the furnishing of it entirely to you," Francis told her. "It will give you something to think about."

Margaret looked thoughtful. "It seems a big undertaking for one so inexperienced in such matters," she remarked. "Suppose the result should disappoint you?"

"I think your taste may safely be depended upon," Francis said dryly.

This compliment caused Margaret to move towards the door with a sigh. "She's the only woman I ever knew who didn't flutter at a pretty speech," Bellamy said to himself.

During the journey home the carriage was obliged to pause where the Drive turns into Seventy-second Street, and in this interval Margaret found herself being stared at by a woman in a smart victoria who had a moment before bowed to Bellamy.

"There's a lady who will be little short of furious when she reads of our wedding," he said when they were moving again; "she wants to marry me herself."

Margaret's face softened. "I am sorry for her," she said gently.

"Don't waste your pity," returned Francis; "it's my money she loves, not me."

But Margaret, who had noted the look in the woman's eyes as they rested on Bellamy, thought differently. She was so grave and silent during the latter part of the drive that Francis said, as the carriage stopped, "I wonder what you have been thinking, with that stern look on your face."

"I have been thinking of how sorry I am for any woman who is unfortunate enough to love you," Margaret responded coldly.

Contrary to his usual custom on the rare occasions when they went out together, Francis accompanied his fiancée into the house.

On the threshold of the drawing-room they were met by Mrs. Winthrop, who took no notice of Bellamy, but put her arms round Margaret and began to cry with her head on the girl's shoulder.

"Mother, mother, what has happened?" cried the bewildered Margaret. "Is father ill?"

"No, no. Oh, how shall I tell you?" wailed Mrs. Winthrop. "I always said he wasn't fit to breathe the same air with you, and I was

right. I don't see how you are to bear this added disgrace. If only you had taken my advice."

"What is it, mother? What has Mr. Bellamy done?"

"Oh, how could he do it, how could he?" continued the weeping woman. "To make you the subject of a wager! I heard all about it at Mrs. Thorpe's this afternoon."

"Mother, stop crying and tell me what you mean," cried Margaret with a white face.

"Miss Margaret, I hardly think your mother is in a condition to impart anything lucidly," put in Bellamy. "If you will come into some other room I will tell you what she is trying to break gently."

"Go into the library," returned Margaret, "and when I have taken mother upstairs I will join you there."

X.

THE woman who entered the library a few moments later did not seem the same Margaret Bellamy was accustomed to see. She appeared dejected—crushed—and she carried herself like a person who has lost the power to struggle. In silence she took the chair Bellamy offered her and waited for him to speak. Quite impartially, as if he were relating a piece of gossip with which neither of them had any concern, Francis described the scene in his brother-in-law's smoking-room on the night of Mrs. Westlake's dance.

"Why did you do it?" Margaret asked when he stopped speaking. Her tone was wholly unimpassioned; evidently she did not think the man she had promised to marry worth wasting her scorn upon.

Bellamy shrugged his shoulders. "I didn't have any reason," he said, "except that the boy provoked me to it by his silly anger over nothing."

"Nothing!" repeated Margaret dully. "Why, after having done all you could to render my humiliation greater than it was, to make my friends despise as well as pity me, did you ask me to be your wife?" she questioned, with a look in her eyes that made Bellamy think of smouldering fire.

"The idea first presented itself to me as a way to win my wager," he answered. "You see, Hatfield wasn't thoughtful enough to stipulate that I must not be engaged to you when I got that kiss."

Margaret was trembling and her eyes flashed, but she did not speak.

"However, I thought better of that plan," Francis went on; "it did not seem exactly a square way to win. But the idea of marrying you stayed in my mind. You see, you showed yourself so beautifully indifferent to me, so equally far from love and hate. I know of no more desirable quality in a wife than indifference. I shouldn't want my wife to dislike me exactly, because then she might make herself dis-

agreeable, but, on the other hand, I can scarcely imagine a worse fate than for a man to be tied to a woman who loves him. A woman in love is the most tiresome creature in the world,—unless she happens to be in love with someone else; then she is interesting until you have won her away from the other fellow.”

“Do you think I will marry you now?”

Margaret had risen to her feet and looked like an angry goddess as she confronted Bellamy. She was superb in her wrath, and the man who watched her lost no detail of the picture she presented. “What a splendid creature she is,” he thought. “She reminds me of a tiger I once saw regain its freedom after being cared for by a cruel keeper. And she doesn’t waste words; that’s what makes her anger so impressive.”

“You must please yourself about recalling the invitations you told me were sent yesterday,” he said aloud, “but I confess I cannot see why this should be necessary. I assure you, my dear lady, this affair has done you no harm; in fact, your high rectitude is more than ever beyond question, because, you see—I paid the wager.”

“You paid the wager,” echoed Margaret. “I thought Mr. Hatfield——”

“You heard that Hatfield had lost his last dollar through his championship of you, I suppose,” interrupted Francis. “Well, that is about as near the truth as gossip ever gets. It’s the old story of laud the hero and damn the villain. If you will ask Westlake, he will tell you that it was I and not Hatfield who paid the wager. So you see your reputation, instead of being tarnished by this little affair, has been polished to a most surprising lustre. The world should regard me as a shining example of the man who came to scoff and remained to pray.”

“You paid the wager!” Margaret said a second time. “Why, you never tried to win it.”

“A pretty big price to pay, wasn’t it—a thousand dollars for a kiss I didn’t get?” Francis said smilingly.

“Why did you do it?” Margaret asked, looking into his black eyes as though she meant to read the truth there, even if his lips lied.

“Why did I pay it, do you mean?” Bellamy inquired. “There was nothing left to do. I hadn’t won the wager, and, unfortunately, in addition to my other failings, I have always had a romantic fancy for the truth.”

“But you hadn’t even tried to win it,” said Margaret in a bewildered way.

“And you want to know why?” queried Bellamy, his smile deepening. “Well, you compel me to be ungallant. Perhaps I had changed my mind and did not want the kiss.”

“If Bellamy expected this speech to taunt Margaret to a greater

show of anger he was disappointed. On the contrary, her face softened a trifle and her tone when she spoke was free from malice.

"I ought to hate you," she said, "and yet I do not. I do despise your views of life and your way of living, but there is something about you that appeals to me in spite of myself. Your brutal honesty, I think it is."

"Some note in my tuneless nature chances to accord with the harmony of yours, I suppose," replied Francis carelessly. "Then you are still willing to marry me, in spite of my deficiencies and drawbacks as a model husband?"

"Yes, I am still willing to marry you, but you must promise—no, you need promise nothing. The deficiencies and drawbacks you speak of are offset by the fact that, since I shall expect nothing of you, I need not fear disappointment. But I have suffered too much, Mr. Bellamy, to feel that I can bear any more humiliation."

"You have nothing to fear from me," Bellamy answered gravely. "I give you my word that so long as you do not interfere with me you may be sure of an equal consideration. You are sure you won't try to reform me?" he added after a pause.

Margaret's face hardened and her eyes grew scornful. "Reform you?" she said with intense calmness. "I would not lift a finger to——"

"Now, you can't say what you want to as it should be said," broke in Bellamy, laughing. "Let me try. You mean that you would not preach a sermon to me to save my soul from perdition. Is that it?"

His listener looked horrified, but before she realized it had nodded her head in assent, and Francis left the room, still laughing.

XI.

KEEPING step to the impressive music of Wagner's "Wedding March," Bellamy and his best man reached the altar. Jack Winthrop stood very straight, his young face set in stern lines, but Francis turned with cool self-possession and took in the details of the picture, a sea of curious faces and, back of the faces, stained-glass windows and flower-trimmed walls.

In the front row of pews on Bellamy's right sat Mrs. Winthrop with a look on her face which seemed to say, "This marriage is not of my arranging, so don't blame me if it does not turn out well." On the other side of the aisle were Mr. and Mrs. Westlake, the latter's gaze fixed with conscious pride upon her handsome brother. Bellamy's eyes swept across the intervening pews to the bridal party, and in the course of the journey caught a glimpse of the white, unhappy face of Hatfield.

At length the little procession reached the altar, the lines of ushers

parted, and Bellamy saw his bride. She was quite composed, a good deal more so, he thought, than on the night he had first met her. Now her outward steadiness hid no inward trembling, and she made her responses clearly and calmly.

She had been right in predicting that her friends would flock to see her married. The crowd that repaired to Mrs. Winthrop's house after the ceremony was over filled it to overflowing. It was still early in the evening when Margaret drew her husband aside and said,—

"I want to avoid any fuss when we leave, so father has promised to have a carriage for us at the servants' entrance by the time I have changed my gown."

"All right; I'll be there," responded Bellamy briefly.

A little later he reached the appointed place and found Margaret sobbing in her father's arms. When Mr. Winthrop caught sight of the bridegroom he dried his daughter's tears with his handkerchief and turned to Bellamy.

"My son," he said brokenly, "of her own will this child has left my care and is now in yours. Be good to her; be good to her."

"I shall not beat her," Francis said,—lightly, but with a smile that robbed the words of brusqueness. The two men shook hands, and Bellamy offered his arm to his wife.

"Come, Margaret," he said.

In the carriage a silence fell on the newly married pair which Francis was the first to break. "Confound the luck!" he exclaimed as he drew a crumpled telegram from the pocket of his overcoat. Margaret had seen the despatch handed to him earlier in the evening.

"Confound the luck!" Francis said again. "Why did I let them persuade me to leave her out there? I might have known they would not half take care of her."

"What is the trouble?" Margaret asked. She had never before seen him show so much genuine feeling, for there was undoubtedly grief mingled with his impatience.

"The trouble is that I ought to start for Chicago to-night."

"Why don't you?" Margaret asked gently.

Her husband turned round to stare at her. "Why don't I what?" he demanded.

"Start for Chicago to-night. You can see me comfortably settled in a hotel and still have time to catch the midnight train."

Bellamy did not at once reply: he seemed to be reviewing his wife's astonishing proposition in his mind. "By Jove, that's not a half bad plan," she heard him mutter. "It would be a queer thing to do, though."

Margaret smiled. "Yes, it would be a little odd," she admitted; "but does that matter, if your business is important?"

"It is important," Bellamy declared. "I wouldn't lose——" He broke off abruptly to ask, "Do your people know where we were going?"

"No," responded Margaret. "It is not fashionable at present to tell where one expects to spend one's honeymoon, so I can stay quietly in the hotel until you get back, and no one need be the wiser. I told them at home that I might not write."

"I shall not be gone more than a week, perhaps not that long," said Bellamy, when he had given an order to the driver. "You might come part way to meet me; then you could have your family at the station on our return and we could make a dramatic entry into the city together."

"No," replied Margaret decidedly; "I will figure in no more tableaux. I told mother I should probably not let her know when we expected to come back, but would send her a note as soon as we arrived. On your return we can drive to the house in a hired carriage and no one need know——"

"That we spent our honeymoon apart," finished Francis, laughing. "Perhaps it is shabby of me to leave you like this," he continued, "but it is, I may almost say, necessary that I should go. And I don't flatter myself that my presence would add greatly to your happiness."

"It wouldn't," said Margaret quickly. "And to tell you the truth, I shall be glad to stay in town and rest instead of taking the trip we planned."

"You do look as though a rest would do you good," Bellamy admitted. "How sensible you are always. Here we are," he continued, as the carriage stopped; "I'll see that they give you decent rooms and then I must go. I will have to head off your trunks at the station and have them sent here. I sha'n't have any too much time to catch my train."

The splendor of the apartments to which Margaret was presently shown indicated that she was to be served royally during her stay in the hotel. The most devoted lover could not have provided more carefully for her comfort than Francis did.

On opening the door of her parlor in answer to a knock, Margaret found her husband on the threshold. He came in and looked about him critically.

"I see they've given you comfortable quarters," he said. "You are to have flowers every morning and the papers. I wonder why it is, by the way, that when a man has been treating his wife shabbily he always gives her flowers. Let me see, was there anything else? Oh, yes. There is a book-store just across the street, so you can send for what you want, and a maid for you will be here presently. I must be off at once," concluded Bellamy.

Margaret rose and came towards him. She had taken off her hat

and gloves, and the glitter of her wedding-ring, conspicuous in its newness, caught his eye.

"Good-by," she said; "I hope your trip will be a pleasant one."

"And I trust you will be comfortable," Francis replied, and looked at her a brief space in silence before he added softly: "Good-by, Mrs. Francis Bellamy. I used sometimes in the days of my youth to wonder how the woman would look who would bear that title. Good-by. I'll telegraph you when to expect me back."

A moment later he was gone. He did not remember until he lay in his berth, speeding westward, that his wife had not asked the nature of the business that took him away from her.

After Bellamy's departure a small package on the table attracted Margaret's attention. It proved to be a roll of money enclosed in a crumpled yellow paper, evidently left there for her by her husband. As she was wrapping the money up again to give back to Bellamy on his return, she saw that the paper was the telegram that had called him away, and without intending to do so, she read in a flash the words written upon it:

"Sibyl is dying. Don't think we can save her."

"ADAMS."

XII.

THE western sky was ablaze with crimson splendor as Margaret and Bellamy drove to their new home at the close of a glorious June day. A telegram had preceded them to notify the housekeeper of their coming, so although the sun had but just set, lights shone in every window.

Francis had not been inside the house since the work of decorating and furnishing had begun under Margaret's direction; it had been a whim of his not to see it until she pronounced it complete.

From the centre of the spacious hall, whose walls were dotted with curtained door-ways, a marble stairway ran up to a landing, where it separated into two flights, one going to the right and the other to the left. The massive newel-posts supported the life-size figures of two Syrian boys, who carried flaming torches held high above their heads.

At the right of the stairs was a gay little tent that looked like the booth of a fortune-teller at a fair. Inside hung a jewelled lamp, and Francis caught glimpses of cushioned seats and bright-colored pillows.

On the other side of the stairs was a many-windowed tower, and under the windows a seat had been built. There were pillows here too, but they were dainty affairs, and these, with the white curtains and the tea-table, with flowers in a tall vase standing in its centre, made this bower a decided contrast to the Oriental splendor on the other side of the hall.

Margaret took off her wraps and gave them to a servant. "Will you look at the drawing-room before you go upstairs?" she said to Francis. "I am curious to know whether it pleases you."

Her husband followed her without replying. The room they entered was lofty and had high, narrow windows, whose upper sashes enclosed panes of amber glass. The walls were upholstered in yellow satin, that changed to white above the moulding; the pictures were paintings in heavy gilt frames and engravings in white ones; the furniture was white upholstered in yellow damask, and the pale yellow carpet was strewn with white fur rugs.

There were gleaming white statues on onyx pedestals; there were lamps with fluffy yellow shades; thrifty palms rose from jardinières that looked like mammoth golden pearls, and from behind a glass screen made pretty with painted daffodils there was a white-and-gold piano.

"What do you think of it?" Margaret asked.

"I shall have to get used to it before I can tell you that," Francis replied. "It is certainly unlike any room I ever saw before. Splendid is the word to describe it, I should say."

"And perhaps you are thinking that splendor isn't apt to be comfortable," Margaret retorted with a smile. "I assure you the rest of the rooms are very unlike this one. I have fitted up a den for you on this floor, well away from the music-room, and upstairs two of the rooms on the right are yours also. I ventured to take for granted that you would dine here to-night," she added; "but in future I shall make no demands upon your time."

In the dining-room the rich hangings, the satin walls, and the carpet were all of palest blue, and the furniture was of dark green oak upholstered in light blue leather.

"I shall ask mother and father and Jack, and your sister and Mr. Westlake, to dine here to-morrow," Margaret said to Bellamy as they seated themselves at the table.

Francis made a wry face. "You may count on my absence," he said. "Family dinner-parties are not to my taste."

Whatever Margaret's guests at dinner on the following evening thought of their host's lack of courtesy in not being present, his absence was unquestionably a relief to all of them. He came in, however, as they were about to leave.

There was some constraint in the greetings exchanged. Mr. Westlake's manner, as he shook hands with his brother-in-law, held both regard and disapproval; his wife kissed her brother with a good deal of affection, but was plainly nervous; Mrs. Winthrop evinced a pathetic desire to make the best of a regrettable state of affairs by trying to appear cordial, and Jack's greeting was frigid. Mr. Winthrop was perhaps the only one present, with the exception of Bellamy, who was

master of the situation. These two shook hands in an unemotional way that did much to set the others at ease.

The greetings over, Francis sat down with an air of weariness. "For once in my life, at least," he said, "I've done a hard day's work. I've been trying to bring order out of chaos in the stables. You must go through them soon," he added to Westlake. "Oh, that reminds me, Jim, I've made arrangements to have Sibyl brought here. She's been at death's door."

Margaret looked up quickly, first at her husband, then at Mr. Westlake, and was astonished to see a look of genuine pleasure come into the latter's face. "It will be good to see Sibyl again," he said.

In a flash Margaret understood who Sibyl was.

After the departure of the guests the master and mistress of the house went up the broad stairs together. At the top Margaret paused and said:

"Will you wait here a moment? I have something to give you."

She disappeared through a door leading to her rooms, coming back in a moment with a small package, which she handed to her husband. It was the roll of money he had given her on the night of their marriage.

"You must take that back," Margaret said gently. "You have already given me half your fortune. I think that is what a man should do when he marries, but I will accept nothing more from you."

Bellamy put the money in his pocket with an amused air. "Why don't you offer to pay me board?" he asked mockingly.

Instead of showing anger at this speech, Margaret smiled. "I think I shall earn my board by my services as head housekeeper," she said good-humoredly. "By the way, I have something to tell you that may amuse you. That night at the hotel I read, without meaning to, the words of the telegram in which that money is wrapped, and until to-night I thought that Sibyl was a woman." As she stopped speaking Margaret broke into a peal of musical laughter, in which Bellamy did not join.

"Sibyl is the horse who saved my life when Westlake and I were together in the Rockies," he said. "And you thought she was a woman? How did it happen, then, that when I came back I was not favored with your opinion of my conduct?"

"I promised not to interfere with you, and I mean to keep my word," Margaret replied coldly as she turned away.

XIII.

As time went on Margaret proved that she meant what she had said. She never questioned her husband's movements; he came and went as he pleased, and sometimes did not see his wife for days. When

they did meet her manner was invariably pleasant, and if Bellamy happened to be at home at meal-time he found his wife willing to talk or ready to sit silent if he chanced to be in a morose mood and disinclined for conversation.

As soon as the weather grew warm Margaret went away with her mother. During her absence she heard but seldom from her husband. She knew that he took a flying trip abroad, and once he surprised her by coming to spend a week in the seaside place she and Mrs. Winthrop were then visiting, but his wife saw little of him during his stay, and he left suddenly without saying good-by.

Cool weather came, and Margaret returned to town and settled down for the winter in her new home. Francis also came back, and all things were as they had been before the flitting.

From the line of carriages he often saw before the door Bellamy inferred that Margaret's marriage had made no difference in her social position, but he rarely encountered any of her guests, and all her entertainments took the form of affairs at which the presence of a host was not necessary.

He wondered sometimes how much news of him reached her ears. He had no doubt that many tales of his doings were carried home by Jack Winthrop and repeated by her mother to Margaret. But whatever Margaret heard, she made no sign.

One day Francis, who was asleep on a lounge in a curtained recess in the library, was awakened by the voices of Margaret and her mother on the other side of the curtain.

"I know you have forbidden me to say a word against your husband, Margaret," Mrs. Winthrop was saying plaintively, "but I feel that I must speak. That man's wild life—the way he drinks and gambles, and the women with whom he spends his time—is the talk of the town. The men we know will have nothing to do with him, and Jack says they speak of you in tones of hushed pity. I have told you all this before, and yet I don't believe you have spoken a word of remonstrance to him."

"No," said Margaret, "I have not, and I do not mean to. He is not unkind to me, so why should I interfere with him? It is of no consequence to me what he does or where he spends his time."

"But I should think you would long to see him changed," protested her mother. "It may be that this marriage was arranged by Providence and it is your mission to reform your husband. You have beauty and charm enough to touch the heart of any man, and perhaps by making him love you, you could accomplish wonders with him. It may be that he cares for you a little already: you say he is not unkind to you, and I've noticed that his eyes follow you constantly."

Bellamy heard a low laugh from Margaret. "My dear mother,"

she responded, "my husband is not unkind to me because I do not get in his way, but I assure you he has as little affection for me as I have for him. As to trying to make him care for me, I shall never do that. I prefer a loveless life to the love of a man like him."

There was a rustling of silk as Mrs. Winthrop rose. "You used to be like other girls, Margaret," she said, "but I don't pretend to understand you any more. I was telling your father so the other day, and he said that suffering was very apt to make an enigma of a woman. Life is a disappointment anyway," Margaret's mother went on; "I used to hope for so much for you, and now I am unhappy about you all the time."

"You need not be," Margaret said quickly. "I am not unhappy, mother; indeed, I am quite content."

"I should think you would feel ashamed of your husband."

"Perhaps I should be if I cared more for him," Bellamy heard Margaret say as she followed her mother from the room.

He lay with closed eyes, thinking over what he had heard. Truly he had what he had wished for in a wife—indifference.

After this incident Francis found that his wife's indifference irritated rather than pleased him. He began to wish that she would interfere with him in order that he might have the pleasure of opposing her, and he fell into the habit of annoying her in little ways in an effort to disturb her composure, but all his endeavors in this direction left his wife unruffled.

"I don't believe she has any temper," Bellamy said to himself one day; "and a woman without a temper is—the only creature worse than a woman with one."

Not long after this, on entering the house one afternoon Bellamy found Margaret seated in the hall with a caller, and some impulse prompted him to pause and be introduced to the guest. Miss Sinclair was a vivacious young woman who prided herself on her cleverness and wit, and Francis was drawn into a battle of words with her. In the attempt to be brilliant his antagonist soon got beyond her depth, and he amused himself by having a little fun at her expense.

While Bellamy led the guest on to make the most absurd speeches, quite unconscious of the fact that she was being held up to ridicule, his wife sat by in silence, but after Miss Sinclair had taken her departure Margaret came back to her husband.

"In future," she said, her voice clear as the note of a bell on frosty air, "you will please show more courtesy to my guests."

Francis leaned back and surveyed his wife, his eyes mirthful, his mouth insolent. "How imperious we are!" he exclaimed. "And suppose I refuse 'in future to please show more courtesy to my guests,'"—he mimicked her tone,—“have you thought out what you will do?"

An angry light burned a moment in Margaret's eyes, then died. "No," she replied calmly, "I have not. I have never found you unjust, and it did not occur to me that you would refuse."

After staring at her for a brief space Bellamy broke into a roar of laughter. "Now what can I do in the face of such a speech?" he cried. "A clever woman, if she has tact, can outwit the devil himself."

XIV.

SHORTLY before Christmas Margaret told Bellamy that she expected a guest who might remain the greater part of the winter. "Gertrude Weldon was a school-mate of mine," she said. "Her father has lately died, leaving his affairs much involved, and until they are settled Gertrude will have no home and almost no money. She writes to ask if she may come to me for awhile."

"Have her come, by all means," Bellamy said absently, and went out.

He returned late the same afternoon to find the street lined with carriages and a canopy before the door. He had been drinking a good deal during the day, but, having been out-of-doors most of the time, had felt no ill effects from the liquor. Now the warm, flower-scented air of the house caused his brain to become confused and set everything whirling before his eyes. A babel of voices came from the drawing-room, but he met no one as he mounted the stairs.

In the upper hall he encountered his wife, radiant in an imposing gown of white velvet. Upon seeing his flushed face and unsteady gait she started and turned pale, and Bellamy's intoxicated condition did not prevent him from noting the look of disgust on her face. His mind was too blurred, however, to retain the impression long.

"I'm just in time for your party, my dear," he said thickly. "Come downstairs and I'll sing for the pretty ladies. You didn't know I could sing, did you? Well, I can. Oh, you don't know half my accomplishments."

His wife looked at him in horror, and Bellamy returned her gaze with admiration in his eyes.

"You're a beauty!" he exclaimed. "A beauty, but too much like a statue. Do you know, I've never kissed you. You owe me a kiss too."

He lurched forward and would have taken her in his arms, but Margaret, eluding his grasp, went swiftly past him and opened the door leading to her rooms.

"Come in here," she said.

"In there!" cried Francis,—"in your own private sanctum? This is the first time I've been honored with an invitation."

Margaret moved aside as Bellamy stepped from the brilliantly-lighted hall to the twilight of the room beyond. A moment later the door closed and a key was turned in the lock.

With an oath he looked about him for a way of escape. There were two doors leading to other rooms, but these proved to be locked also. As Francis stood considering what to do, he heard the strains of a waltz the orchestra was playing on the floor below.

He turned towards the door through which he had come in and started to cross the room, muttering savagely, "I'll get out of here or rouse the house in the attempt," but in his journey he stumbled over a couch, and, instead of carrying out his intention, threw himself down and fell into a deep sleep.

When he awoke it was dark and the house was quiet. The events of the afternoon were dim in his memory, but his wife's face, as she had looked at him in the hall, remained persistently before him.

Taking a match from his pocket, Bellamy lighted the gas and looked about him. He was in his wife's sitting-room. The place was unlike any other room in the house, and seemed to possess, in addition to its atmosphere of charm, something approaching a personality.

Francis felt for perhaps the first time in his life a sense of shame, and he longed to get out of the room; it seemed to him that his presence must contaminate it. It was not long before he heard the door unlocked, but when he went into the hall there was no one in sight.

When Bellamy awoke at noon next day his remorse had vanished, but he still wished the meeting with Margaret over. He dressed and went downstairs to be told that his wife had gone out.

His breakfast finished, he read the papers and then wandered from room to room, not feeling inclined to go out and yet not knowing what to do with himself in the house.

Finding himself presently in the large hall, he walked to the little bower at the left of the stairs, where the sunshine streamed in through the white curtains. Margaret's embroidery basket lay on the window-seat, and on top of the basket was a letter.

Bellamy sat down, and his roving eyes wandered aimlessly about, now here, now there, noting a picture that was hung slightly awry and a pigeon hopping about on the flagging outside the window, but look where he would, he found his gaze returning persistently to the letter.

After awhile he picked it up. It contained several sheets of paper and was written in a sprawling, girlish hand. He opened and read it.

"MY DEAR, DEAR MADGE: I shall be with you day after to-morrow. I can scarcely make it seem true that I am really to visit you and see your home and your husband and your dear self. I am extremely curious about my visit, for you have told me little of your home and nothing about your husband except (after I had asked you three times) that he is very good-looking. I do not even know whether you are rich or poor, but that does not matter much, does it, when one is happy? Ah, Madge, my dear, you, with your home and your

husband, cannot know what it is to be lonely. Since papa's death I have been so tossed about that I know, better than you can, how fortunate you are.

"Do you remember how, when we roomed together at school, we used to lie awake at night and plan visits to each other after we were married, and describe the sort of husbands we wished to have? You were always more emphatic than any of us in declaring that love was the 'greatest thing in the world;' no amount of luxury, you said, could compensate for a loveless life; with love, the barest existence could be rendered happy. I think your ideas were colored by reading so much poetry.

"Your ideal, I remember, was little short of a god, his one human attribute being that he was a bit of a tyrant. I know that the real husband cannot come up to your girlish dream,—no human being could,—but I hope he is worthy of you.

"I must stop now and do my packing. Do not think, because of this letter, that I have lost all my spirits. When you see me you will find that I am still, on the surface at least, the same old

"GERTRUDE."

Bellamy folded the letter and laid it back where he had found it, then turned and looked out of the window, his mind dwelling on the contrast between his wife's girlish dream of a husband and the reality. There flashed through his brain also a vague idea of suggesting to Margaret that they form a conspiracy to deceive her friend. He had read of such things. And what a joke it would be for them to play for awhile at being a loving couple!

Suddenly he roused himself with a start. He was a fool, and the woman who had written the letter was a fool too for remembering so much nonsense. Girls always talked a lot of twaddle that ought to be forgotten with their teens. One thing was certain, however: he had behaved shabbily to his wife, and he would apologize to her.

His opportunity to do this came a little later, when Margaret returned. The wind had deepened the color in her cheeks and she wore a set of becoming furs. As she advanced to the fire her husband thought he had never seen her look so lovely. He stationed himself opposite her.

"I wish to ask your pardon for that episode of yesterday," he said; "I promise you it will not occur again."

Bellamy's words were apologetic; his manner was that of a man accustomed to winning forgiveness easily when he chose to ask it.

"What are you thinking?" he added as his wife did not reply.

"That you may find promising easier than keeping your promise," Margaret said, speaking with evident reluctance. "The habit of drinking——"

"Drinking is not a habit with me," Bellamy interrupted haughtily.

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"I am not a slave to my own will. When I drink it is because I wish to, not because I must; and I can stop when I choose."

Margaret made no answer to this, and her silence roused her husband's anger. "Why don't you say something?" he cried in a sudden burst of passion. "Rake me over the coals if you like; I'm curious to hear the opinion a saint like you must have of me."

Still Margaret did not speak. Not until Francis leaned forward to look into her face did she raise her eyes, and then, to his astonishment, he saw that they were full of unshed tears.

Without more words he turned away and left her, and next morning a servant informed Margaret that her husband had gone out of town and might not return for several weeks.

XV.

BELLAMY came back a fortnight later to find the house in a whirl of gayety. As he entered the hall the sound of a voice singing came from the drawing-room, followed by the clapping of hands and a pleasant babble of talk and laughter. The next moment Margaret appeared in the door-way, her face wearing a happier look than Francis had ever seen upon it.

She came towards him smiling. "Miss Weldon is here," she said. "I have been giving an 'At Home' to introduce her to my friends, and I have asked half a dozen or so of the young people to remain to dinner. Shall you be at home?"

"Yes, but I will dine in my own rooms," Bellamy returned somewhat ungraciously.

Before starting for a drive on the following afternoon Francis went into the library to look at a paper, and there came upon his wife and her guest, the latter embroidering, the former seated before the fire with her hands clasped behind her head. As she caught sight of her husband Margaret abandoned this attitude for one more conventional.

Francis noted her look of surprise as he seated himself near Miss Weldon and began talking to her with his sunniest smile and most engaging manner. Presently a servant came to tell Bellamy that his horse was at the door.

"Why not come for a drive with me?" he said as he rose, with a glance that included both his listeners. "The day is too fine to waste in the house."

"Gertrude can go," Margaret replied. "I shall be busy this afternoon."

Margaret's husband glanced at her folded hands before he turned to Miss Weldon, who was about to say that she would be delighted to go, when she remembered an engagement and regretfully told Bellamy that she too must stay at home.

"To-morrow, then?" inquired Francis. "Will you go to-morrow?"

"I shall be very glad," replied Miss Weldon.

A moment before a card had been brought to Margaret, and as Francis went out he passed Harry Hatfield, who, preceded by a servant, was on his way to the library. The two men nodded curtly to each other.

Next day at the same hour Miss Weldon came down to the hall, where Bellamy was waiting, wrapped in furs, but Margaret, who was with her, was not dressed for the street.

"My first drive through the streets of New York," cried Gertrude gayly. "Do you envy me?" she added, turning to Margaret, who replied, "No; a horseback ride would be more to my taste than a drive."

"Well, good-by; I wish you were coming." The girl turned to wave a smiling adieu to her hostess as she went out.

At dusk Miss Weldon and Bellamy returned to find Margaret serving tea to Hatfield in the library. The meeting between the two men was, considering all things, singularly free from constraint. Always himself self-possessed, Bellamy had power to set others at ease or to render them profoundly uncomfortable. In the present instance he dispelled the awkwardness of the situation by the genial grace of his manner.

Gertrude was in radiant spirits. "Your husband was so kind about pointing out places and people," she told Margaret when Bellamy was out of earshot.

For the next few months the days went by without incident to mark them as days to be remembered. Francis came and went as he pleased, hearing laughter and music on all sides of him, for Margaret was doing everything in her power to make her old school-mate's visit pleasurable, but he entered into none of the gayety and saw little of his wife and her guest.

During this time Margaret seemed to her husband to be content, almost happy. And yet there was often in her eyes a look of weariness that contrasted strangely with her smiling lips, and sometimes when Bellamy came suddenly upon her alone the expression of her face caused him to wonder whether some new sorrow was eating her heart out or if she still mourned her faithless lover.

On a bright, blustery day towards the latter end of March Francis chanced to enter the library as a servant came through another doorway with the tea things. He accepted in silence the cup of tea his wife presently offered him.

"Mr. Bellamy," cried Gertrude gayly, "I shall not blame you if you doubt my word when I tell you that before you came in your wife and I were deep in a discussion of fashions. It is hard to imagine Madge interested in anything so superficial, isn't it? It always seems to me that her clothes must be designed and fashioned by fairies and brought

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to her ready to wear. That reminds me: you must be sure to dine at home next Tuesday; Madge and I have a surprise planned for you."

"Gertrude, what do you mean?" Margaret inquired, frowning slightly. The look of annoyance on her face did not escape Francis.

"I have never seen your wife wearing anything but white in the house," Gertrude went on, "and she confessed to me that she has I don't dare to tell you how many white gowns. I explained to her that while white is in a way becoming to her, since she is always lovely in it, it makes her more like a statue than a woman. By dint of much argument and my almost superhuman powers of persuasion, I induced her to order a costume of—what color do you think? On second thoughts, I will not tell you; you shall see for yourself. I designed the gown, and I flatter myself that Madge will look her best in it."

"It will be a ridiculous dress, and I may never wear it," Margaret put in coldly.

"Nevertheless, I shall dine at home on Tuesday in the hope of seeing the result of Miss Weldon's good taste," Bellamy said.

"You shall see Galatea come to life," Gertrude promised him.

Francis entered the drawing-room a few moments before the dinner-hour on Tuesday to find Miss Weldon there alone. When Margaret came into the room a little later she was dressed, from the aigrette in her hair to her satin slippers, in a brilliant yet rich-toned shade of red. Bellamy told himself that he should not have known his wife had he seen her anywhere else, so completely did the warm, vivid coloring of her gown transform her.

"She is not a statue after all," Francis thought; "she's a woman. And what a woman! Somers was a fool." This soliloquy was brought to a close by the entrance of Hatfield, who, it seemed to Francis, was always in the house of late. That evening for the first time since his marriage Bellamy remained at home.

Hatfield had taken his departure, and Margaret and her guest were bidding the master of the house good-night in the hall when Bellamy said abruptly:

"Margaret, will you wait a moment? I want to speak to you."

Concealing some surprise, and, her husband fancied, a little annoyance, at his request, Margaret said "Good-night" to Gertrude and came back to the fire, the train of her gown a wave of flame upon the marble floor.

For a moment Francis stood looking her over in the mocking, insolent way she knew so well. "Do you think your flirtation with Hatfield in good taste?" he said at last slowly.

Margaret looked at him without replying. She was calm and very quiet, but Bellamy was reminded of a panther crouched for a spring.

"Do you think it does the immaculate reputation I know you pride

yourself on any good to have your old lover always hanging about the house?" he asked.

Margaret's figure straightened and the hands at her sides clenched. "I think this," she said in the clear tone that always roused Bellamy's wrath; "neither my reputation nor what I do is anything to you. If I choose to have a lover, or twenty lovers, it is not your affair."

Margaret's husband regarded her with a mocking smile. "So?" he said, with a note in his voice that sent all the blood from her face and left it colorless. "You have at last arrived at a common-sense view of the matter. That's right, my dear; have a lover, or twenty if you prefer. Perhaps—who knows?—I may myself be one of the number."

Margaret did not speak or move, and for a brief space the two looked at each other, Francis amused and plainly pleased with his gibe, his wife's lovely face ablaze with indignation. Then, suddenly, Margaret's hand was lifted, and in a twinkling Bellamy's cheek smarted and she had turned away.

In a white heat of passion he took a step forward and grasped her arm. "Wait a moment," he cried in a hoarse voice, roughly turning her round so that she faced him. "If I have insulted you, you have repaid me with interest," he muttered between closed teeth, meanwhile holding her at arm's length, although she seemed to writhe at his touch.

"I don't know what to do with you," he went on; "whether to kill you or to shake you—ah, I have it: I'll take a kiss,—the one I paid for not getting."

Before his captive had time to struggle Bellamy had drawn her into his arms. Perhaps she knew it would be useless to try to get away; at any rate, she made no effort to free herself as he bent and kissed her lips.

Even then he did not at once loosen his hold, but kept her in his arms and looked into her face. Margaret's eyes were not lowered, but met his defiantly.

"Let me go!" she commanded.

Bellamy released her. "Yes, go," he muttered sullenly, "and next time think twice before you slap a man's face."

Once free, he expected to see her rush away, but instead she merely moved a few paces and stood with her face turned away from him and her head bent.

It was Bellamy who mounted the stairs first. On the landing he turned and looked down at her. She was standing where he had left her, a splendid figure in her flaming dress, with the firelight on her beautiful, angry face.

"Good-night, Lady Disdain," he called, but his wife did not look up.

A week afterwards Francis heard two of the servants discussing the engagement of Gertrude Weldon to Hatfield.

XVI.

SPRING had come. Miss Weldon had departed to pay a visit to a relative and prepare her trousseau, and Margaret was settled for the summer in the country-place Francis had lately bought. He came down at intervals, but spent most of his time in town.

The kiss he had stolen seemed to have turned his wife's indifference to dislike. She made no effort to conceal the fact that she avoided him, and she seldom spoke to him, except to answer his questions.

This course caused Francis to assume the air of a devoted husband. He followed her about the house, he invited her to drive with him, and his voice, when he spoke to her, took the tone of a man whose wife loves him.

He brought her gifts too,—books and flowers and boxes of candy, and sometimes even jewels: all of which Margaret refused with cold hauteur.

Early in June she told Bellamy that she was going soon to pay a visit to Miss Weldon. "Gertrude is staying with her aunt," she said, "and she has asked me to come and help her get ready for the wedding."

Francis did not try to hide his satisfaction at this news. "Things couldn't have been better arranged," he remarked. "I was just on the point of asking you if you would care to go to your mother for awhile. I have a lot of people coming next week, friends of mine, and I'm afraid you and they wouldn't get on well together."

After he had left her Margaret sighed. In the short time she had been there she had grown to love her country home, and the prospect of having the house and the blooming gardens she had planned with so much care invaded during her absence was not pleasant. Still, she did not remonstrate with Bellamy, but went on with her preparations to go away.

On the day set for her departure a telegram came from Gertrude, saying that on account of her aunt's illness Margaret's visit would have to be postponed.

"Then you'll have to go to your mother's after all," Bellamy said when Margaret told him. But this Margaret refused to do. She would not be sent away in such an unceremonious fashion, she declared with a show of spirit very different from her usual calm acquiescence to all her husband's plans.

Bellamy shrugged his shoulders. "Suit yourself," he said carelessly; "only don't complain if my friends don't please you."

The guests came next day, and to Margaret's surprise there were several women among the crowd of men. Although Francis had not asked his wife to receive his friends, she was in the hall on their arrival, but she quickly discovered that these people did not consider a hostess

a necessary adjunct to a house party. With one exception the men and women Bellamy presented to his wife, after a cool nod and critical survey, ignored her.

The exception was a Mr. Randal, a good-looking man with a manner almost as easy and fascinating as Bellamy's could be when the latter chose. This gentleman stationed himself by Margaret's side, and after he had talked to her awhile in his low, pleasant voice, she found that they had much in common.

During the weeks that followed Bellamy's friends made themselves quite at home. It did not occur to them to consult their hostess about anything they wished to do. They despoiled gardens and greenhouses, they ordered horses and carriages when it suited them, and they explored the house from roof to cellar, with the exception of the apartments of its mistress.

It was in her own rooms that Margaret spent most of her time, and at night she lay staring into the darkness, listening to the music and sound of dancing that came up from the floor below, and knowing that after the dancing was over Bellamy and his guests would spend the rest of the night at cards.

When the news of Bellamy's house party and the names of his guests came to Mrs. Winthrop's ears, that lady wrote most commandingly for her daughter to come to her, but Margaret, for some reason, with which she did not acquaint her mother, chose to stay where she was.

Although the people who filled the house did not trouble themselves about its mistress or what she might think of them and their doings, all but one of them treated her courteously, if coolly.

This one was the woman to whom Bellamy was most attentive, and who appropriated his attentions as her right. She seemed always ready to annoy Margaret, in which intention she was usually circumvented by Gerald Randal. He stood between Margaret and Beatrice Langdon's rudeness; indeed, he was at all times so gently considerate of her that the lonely woman grew to regard him as a friend.

Late in the afternoon of a hot July day, on going to the library in search of a book, Margaret found her husband's friends gathered about the round centre-table. The magazines that usually lay upon it had been removed to the floor, and the company had their hands piled up on its polished top.

Wondering what new whim had seized them, Margaret was about to slip out again when one of the girls caught sight of her and cried, "We're playing Truth, Mrs. Bellamy; won't you stay and play too?"

The others seized with avidity on the idea of having her join them. Margaret saw her husband frown when Miss Langdon added her entreaties to the general cry.

After a moment's hesitation she advanced towards the group,

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smiling. "I seem to remember having played Truth before," she said. "Isn't it a child's game?"

"Yes," replied one of the men. "Someone chooses a number; then we draw out our hands one at a time from the bottom of the pile, meanwhile counting. The person to whom the number chosen falls must answer truthfully a question put to him by each one who is playing."

The game went on rapidly, amid much merriment, and presently the number fell to Margaret. She was asked, by those whose minds were not inventive, her favorite color, her favorite flower, her favorite author.

Then followed various questions in regard to the personal appearance of some of the company. Did she not think Mr. Ralston's nose too large, and was not Miss Ashton's figure too slender and Mrs. Markham too plump?

By bringing tact to her aid Margaret managed to answer these questions without offending. When someone inquired if she did not consider Gerald Randal good-looking, she was so glad to be able to reply by an unqualified affirmative that her "Yes" was spoken with some emphasis.

A smile went round the room and Bellamy laughed aloud. Before he had looked as though he regretted her having been drawn into the game; now Margaret saw the expression of his face change, and knew that when his turn came she need expect no consideration. Time proved that she was right.

The next person to question Margaret was a pale, listless young woman, whose unrequited love for Gerald Randal was making her morbid.

"Mrs. Bellamy," she said in a melancholy tone, "what, in your opinion, is the greatest sorrow that can come to a woman?"

Margaret stood next her questioner, and her hand was unconsciously laid on the girl's shoulder as she replied slowly,—

"The greatest sorrow that can come to a woman is to love a man she cannot look up to nor respect."

The others, who were laughing loudly at some remark Randal had made a moment before, did not hear question or answer, but Margaret felt her husband's eyes upon her in a searching look.

It was now his turn to question her. The talk and laughter suddenly ceased and a hush fell on the room. Bellamy's black eyes sparkled with wicked satisfaction as he said,—

"Madge, do you not think Miss Langdon a beautiful woman?"

Margaret flushed with anger, more at his daring to call her Madge than at the question. "Not beautiful, but very handsome," she answered readily.

Miss Langdon bit her lip at this reply. As she was on Bellamy's left her turn came next.

"Do you not consider your husband the most graceless sinner in existence?" Beatrice shot her poisoned arrow lightly.

The stillness became intense, and every pair of eyes grew rounder as those present looked from one woman to the other. It was Bellamy's voice that broke the silence.

"Your question is out of order, Beatrice," he said quietly. "It is a rule laid down in courts of law that a woman is not required to testify against her husband."

Without giving Miss Langdon a chance to reply Bellamy laid his hand upon the table, Randal covered it with his, and the others followed suit.

This time the lot fell to Bellamy, whose ready wit enabled him to make most of his replies amusing. His answer to Randal's query if he were happy was a vehement "No!"

Miss Langdon's turn came last.

"Whom do you consider the most beautiful woman you have ever seen?" As she put the question Beatrice turned her head archly and smiled into her host's eyes.

"My wife."

Bellamy's answer came before the others had time to wonder what he might be going to say, and its suddenness threw Beatrice off her guard. Her smile died and her face showed her chagrin.

In the confusion that followed as the game broke up Francis sought his wife's side. "What should you have replied to the query of the fair Beatrice if I had not come to your rescue so neatly?" he demanded.

"I should have said you were a sinner, yes, but a graceful rather than a graceless one."

Bellamy stared at her a moment, then said as he turned away:

"It's a pity you didn't get a chance to make your speech. I wonder where you learned to fence with words so cleverly."

XVII.

IN the evening, instead of going to her rooms as soon as dinner was over, Margaret strolled out to the cool, moonlit gardens. She had not proceeded far when Gerald Randal stepped out from the shadow of the shrubbery and took his place beside her. Margaret smiled in greeting, and for a few moments they walked on in silence.

"Won't you sit down?" Randal said when they came to a rustic bench.

Margaret sank into the seat, a look of weariness on her beautiful face.

"You are tired and unhappy," the man murmured. "I wanted to kill those people who tortured you this afternoon."

"You are kind always," Margaret said gently.

Randal leaned forward. "Surely you must know why I cannot help trying to be kind to you," he whispered with his face close to hers; "you must have guessed that I love you."

Margaret rose and faced him. She seemed to have no words to say, but her scorn spoke in her flashing eyes.

"Now I have angered you," cried Randal. "But I could keep silence no longer."

"Have you any excuse for offering me this insult?" demanded Margaret. "Have I ever given you any reason to think I would listen without anger to the words you have just spoken?"

"No, I can't say that you have," Randal replied curtly. He had dropped his mask of gentle deference and showed himself as he was—a cool, unscrupulous man of the world. "No, I can't say that you have," he repeated, leaning back in his seat and surveying her calmly; "but you are a very lovely woman, you know, and I suppose your beauty and the moonlight went to my head; or perhaps it was the wine I drank at dinner. But come, suppose we talk the matter over sensibly. No doubt it is very commendable in you not to regard the pranks of that worthless husband of yours as an excuse for indulging in a little amusement on your own account, but, after all, don't you think you're something of a fool?"

"Without replying Margaret turned and would have left him, but, angered by her silence, Randal jumped up and caught her by the wrist.

"I have shown you more consideration than your precious husband ever did, and this is my reward," he sneered. "You bear all his neglect with meekness, but because I love you and long to make your life less lonely, you turn on me like a fury. Why don't you reserve your wrath for the man who deserves it more than I do? Do you love him, I wonder, or are you still pining for that scoundrel, Somers? I should think, after your experience with those two—— But that's the way with you women: you throw your hearts under the feet of the men who treat you like dogs."

There was a rustling of bushes, and Randal was silenced by a blow that sent him sprawling to the ground. It was Bellamy who stood over him, trembling with passion.

"It's time you learned to keep your insults for the women who regard them as compliments," Margaret's husband cried.

Randal got upon his feet with a mirthless laugh, and the two men confronted each other, the moonlight streaming on their white, angry faces.

"You are late with your championship," Randal said mockingly. "Had your wife been left less often alone I should not have dreamed of hoping to take your place by her side. I didn't suppose, under the circumstances, you would have any quarrel with your wife's lover."

"Perhaps I shouldn't if you were her lover," returned Francis shortly, "but I won't have her annoyed. Now go; take the first train back to town and don't let me see your face inside my doors again."

Randal stared at his host incredulously. "You don't mean that, Frank," he said at last. "Just now we are both excited, but we are too old friends to let a trifle come between us." Randal held out his hand. "You used to say there was not a woman in the world worth a quarrel between friends," he remarked.

"I was mistaken," Bellamy said curtly, and turned to where Margaret had been standing to find she was no longer there.

She came to her husband next day as he sat alone in the library. "I want to thank you for your protection last night," she said tremulously. "Perhaps I am to blame for what occurred; I may have been too kind to him; but I did not dream that he——"

"You need not take yourself to task," Francis interrupted coldly; "you were not to blame in the least. But since you are so grateful for my protection," he went on in another tone, "will you do me a favor in return for it? Wear that red gown you have to-night. I'm tired of seeing you dressed, like a saint, in white. I would like you to look like other women for a change."

When Margaret came down to dinner resplendent in the gown he had asked her to wear, her husband did not appear to see her, nor did he seem to notice the admiration she excited from the other men, who suddenly became aware that their hostess was a very beautiful woman and showered attentions upon her accordingly. When Margaret went upstairs, however, her husband followed her to the door of her sitting-room.

"Will you come in?" she turned on the threshold to ask.

Bellamy entered the room and threw himself into a chair. If he had an errand he was in no hurry to state it, but sat silently gazing about him in a half-curious, half-unseeing fashion. Presently his glance fell upon his wife.

"I wish you would not wear that red thing again," he exclaimed impatiently.

"I thought you admired this gown," Margaret said, smiling.

"I did," Bellamy replied, his eyes restless again; "but I find now that my taste has changed and I like you better in the white ones, after all. I suppose," he went on after a pause, "you have not forgiven me for what happened the last time I saw you wearing that dress? There's no such word as forgiveness in a good woman's creed," he ended bitterly.

"Yes, I have forgiven you," Margaret said, her tone so low that he could scarcely catch the words.

The man's eyes shone a moment; then the light died out of them and he frowned. "But you haven't forgotten," he muttered. "Can I

do nothing that will cause the memory of that night to fade?" He leaned forward to look into her face. "Margaret, can you never forget?"

"Never!" As she spoke Margaret shrank away from him. "Never!" she repeated vehemently.

Bellamy straightened up and turned away. "Good-night," he said, and went swiftly out of the room.

XVIII.

On the following day Margaret returned from a drive to find the house quiet; Bellamy's guests had departed, bag and baggage.

"I sent them away," he said in answer to her inquiry. "I should never have asked them here had I not——" He broke off abruptly and added, "They are a noisy lot and I was tired of them."

During the month that followed Bellamy was seldom at home, and when he did come down from the city was not his usual self. He had never before, except on rare occasions, been ungracious to his subordinates, but now the servants trembled at his approach, so sure were they that he would find an excuse for a torrent of angry words.

To his wife he was never impatient, but he took little notice of her, and the attentions she had felt he bestowed to annoy her were a thing of the past.

Margaret's life went on as usual. Of her husband's absences or his changed manner she apparently took no heed, treating him with her accustomed calm courtesy, but avoiding him almost as persistently as he tried to keep out of her way. At the close of the summer, however, there crept into her manner towards him a trace of pitying kindness, he looked so worried and unhappy, and once when he came home with a white, haggard face she asked gently, "Is anything troubling you?"

"Yes," returned Bellamy shortly, and without saying more held out a package he had in his hand.

Margaret stood irresolute. "What is it?" she questioned.

With a muttered exclamation Bellamy tossed the parcel on a table. "It's only a book, but I was a fool to hope you would take even a book from me," he cried angrily. "I happened to see the story on a news-stand and I thought you might enjoy it. Everyone is talking of it; it's the book of the year."

"What is the name?" Margaret asked. When Bellamy had told her, she went to the table and took up the package.

"Have you read it?" she asked.

"No," Bellamy said in answer to her question. "I was intending to get another copy for myself, but since you do not want this one——" He held out his hand for the book, but Margaret kept it.

"I have changed my mind," she said; "I will keep this."

Not long afterwards, on a stormy evening, Margaret was writing in her sitting-room when a knock sounded on the door leading to the hall.

In response to a "Come in" her husband entered. He did not look towards her as he said abruptly, "I have bad news for you: I have lost every dollar I possessed."

Margaret did not answer, and after the silence had lasted some moments Bellamy raised his head and looked at his wife. "I wish you would say something," he jerked out angrily. "Read me a lecture; upbraid me for squandering the money you married me for."

"I did not marry you for money," Margaret said quietly.

Bellamy made an impatient gesture. "It's all the same," he muttered. "How is your brilliant social career to be kept up without money?"

"What you call a brilliant social career is not among my ambitions and never was," Margaret retorted quickly. "I married you to save my father from failure, as you know. If for a time I appeared to be engrossed in social pleasures, it was only because of my pride. It is a long while since I have gone into society, in the accepted sense of the term, and it is my wish to spend the winter here instead of going back to the city."

"Here! In this dead-and-alive place!" ejaculated Francis. "How would you amuse yourself? How do you spend your time, anyway? What do you do to make the days pass?"

Margaret waived these questions with a smile. "Sometime perhaps I may tell you," she said; "just now we have more important matters to talk about. When I married you," she went on, speaking slowly and choosing her words, "you gave me half your fortune. I have used little of the money, and now I shall be glad to divide what is left with you. I think I told you that my father has repaid me what I let him have."

There was an odd look in Bellamy's black eyes as they stared at his wife. "I won't take your money," he said roughly. "Anyway, it would be only a drop in the bucket. Half of what you have wouldn't even pay my debts."

"Then take it all." Margaret's tone was eager.

"And leave you penniless? I'm likely to."

"I shall not be penniless," returned Margaret quickly. "Do you remember the book you brought me not long ago?"

"The only gift you ever took from me? Yes."

"I wrote that book." Margaret tried to speak calmly, but her voice was not quite steady nor was it free from pride.

"You wrote that!" Bellamy repeated in a dazed way, as he recalled the popularity of the book and the world's wonder as to who the un-

known author could be. "So that was why you never seemed lonely?" he continued. "You must have made a pretty penny out of it."

"I did," replied Margaret, "and I want to share the pretty penny with you."

"It is impossible," retorted Bellamy sharply. "You might do me the justice of not believing me capable of taking your money."

"Why is it impossible?" questioned Margaret. "When I needed it, I took the money you offered me and was glad to get it. Why should you refuse to let me help you now? In whatever else our feelings for each other have been wanting, at least they have not been lacking in kindness or justice."

"Yes?" said Bellamy. "It was both just and kind, I suppose, to thrust upon you the rabble I had here early in the summer?"

"It was not pleasant for me to have them here, certainly," replied Margaret. "Still, they were your friends and this is your house. And I might have gone away had I chosen."

"Right or wrong, I did it. And now you want me take your money? Well, I suppose rather than have the roof over your head sold I'd better do it. But have you considered where your money will perhaps go? That it may follow mine?"

At these words the light and eagerness died out of Margaret's face and left her looking like a woman carved in marble.

"I consider that half of whatever money I may have belongs to you," she said coldly. "What you choose to do with it is not my affair."

Bellamy rose and began to pace the room. "I shall choose to buy this house for you for one thing," he said. Presently he paused in front of his wife. "Margaret, have you ever been sorry you married me?" he asked. "But what a question! I ought rather to ask if there has been a moment in which you have not been sorry."

Margaret's reply came quickly, as if it were a speech she must make, but wished to have over with. "I have never been sorry I married you, not even for a moment," she said.

Her husband looked at her wildly.

"My God! Am I beneath even your contempt?" he cried, and then, without waiting for an answer, pulled himself together sharply and went on in an unimpassioned tone: "If I am to take that money, I should like to have it as soon as possible."

Margaret went to her desk and wrote out a check. "This is all I happen to have in the bank just at this moment," she explained, "but I will go to the city to-morrow and make arrangements to have the rest transferred to your name."

Bellamy looked at the check his wife handed him and saw that it was drawn for a thousand dollars, the amount of his wager with Hatfield.

"The opportunity for revenge seems always to come to those who do not seek it, and yours is complete," he said as he folded the bit of paper and put it in his pocket. "Have you a copy of—your book here?" he asked.

Margaret took the volume from a book-case and Bellamy carried it to his room, there to read until the gray dawn entered at the windows and paled the lights already there.

As he read he understood why Margaret had published her book anonymously. In its pages he found the key to the enigma she had always been to him. The book was a revelation of Margaret's inner nature, and taught him how little of her real self she had permitted him or anyone to see.

Pride had caused her to hide her suffering behind a barrier of reserve. Without the barrier was cold calmness; within was a wealth of nobility such as Francis, in his experience with lesser women, had not dreamed existed.

In her book Margaret had poured out her heart, had revealed all that she had hidden from the world, and Bellamy, reading between the lines, realized for the first time the strength and sweetness of character of the woman he had married. The book not only showed him what she had suffered, but gave him evanescent glimpses of the woman she might have been had happiness been hers. It did more: It revealed to him the state of his own feelings towards his wife.

With the last words resounding in his brain Bellamy threw his hands forward upon his desk and buried his face in them, his heart echoing and reëchoing one bitter cry, that was like the wail of a lost soul for the paradise beyond its reach.

"Madge! Madge! Madge!"

XIX.

At the close of the week Margaret told her husband that she had invited Mr. and Mrs. Westlake to pay them a visit. Whether she had done this to cheer him or to relieve her own loneliness Francis did not know, but the coming of his sister and her husband pleased him. They were perhaps the only two people of whom he had always been fond.

With the knowledge that he loved his wife there came to Bellamy a conviction that he had no right to try to win her heart, but his hopelessness in regard to his love did not lessen his determination to gain her respect.

He began the task of making a man of himself with no one to help him, like a child groping in the dark, not knowing how to set about being good. His helplessness did not last long, however. Bellamy had been what he was because it had suited him to be so, not because of weakness, and now his indomitable will, turned in an opposite direc-

tion, did not fail him. What he had chosen to be in the past he had been; what he wished to be now he slowly became. The forces of his nature, once powerful for evil, but now arrested and the course of their direction changed, were just as strong for good. Thus Francis fought his battle out by himself. If there were moments when he longed for a hand in his, a voice to urge him onward, he took himself to task as being weak.

He was very busy during these days. Westlake had put him in the way of getting an appointment which paid a fair salary, and Francis was up and off for the city early each morning, only returning in time for a late dinner.

His evenings were for the most part spent at home. Sometimes he played chess with his brother-in-law; at others he made a fourth at whist or sat with a book in his hand and covertly watched his wife.

The change in him, if she noticed it, caused no change in Margaret's manner to her husband, except that at any indication of it she would look at him with an expression in her eyes which either was fear or greatly resembled it.

Margaret was growing afraid of him! As the fact slowly dawned upon him, Francis told himself that this was the most surprising of the many phases of his wife's character he had hitherto observed. Before now she had shown anger, contempt, indifference, courage to oppose and wit to circumvent him, and on occasions even gratitude for the brutal sort of kindness he had sometimes shown her. But fear Francis had not supposed her capable of feeling. And if she had not feared him in the old days, why should she do so now? Over and over again Francis asked himself the question and found no answer.

The winter passed and the Westlakes went back to the city. Spring came and found Francis more changed, had he but known it, than he had ever hoped to be; but still Margaret, if she knew that he had become a better man, gave no sign of being glad.

She went on with her calm round of duties and pleasures much as she had always done, but with a growing restlessness that filled Bellamy with a nameless fear.

He decided that she was doubtless at work upon another book, and that the writing of it kept her mind in an unquiet state, but when he ventured to question her on the subject Margaret replied that she was not writing at all.

Sometimes as he sat alone after his wife had gone to her room Bellamy went over in his mind the incidents that had marked their intercourse—their strange meeting and stranger marriage, and their separate lives since that marriage—and wondered what the end would be. Were things to be always thus? Were their lives always to run side by side and never meet? He felt that he could not bear it. Daily

to see the woman he loved, and yet not daring even to touch her hand, to be near her constantly, and have to battle with the longing to take her in his arms—these things were, to the man unused to resisting his fleetest impulse, growing to be unbearable torture.

Often he told himself that he would go away, out of sight of her face and the sound of her voice, but he knew, even while the resolve was shaping itself in his mind, that to leave her would be harder than to stay.

Then he would plan to exert the charm that had always been potent with women and try if he could not make his wife love him, and there would rise before his mind recollections of nights of dissipation, of the coarse men and painted women he had called his friends: memories that made him loathe himself and that seemed to stand an impassable barrier between his wife and him.

During this time none of his torture of mind showed itself in his attitude towards Margaret. He treated her with grave courtesy, with a manner that was calm as hers. She never knew that he listened for her footstep and the sound of her voice, and that except when she looked at him his eyes were always upon her.

One day in early spring Bellamy did not go to town as usual. He had writing to do at home, he told Margaret at breakfast, and after the meal was over he shut himself in the library.

When she went into the room some hours later Francis had thrown himself upon a lounge. Margaret softened the glare by lowering the shades, after which she came and stood by the couch.

"Can I do anything for you?" she asked, after Bellamy had told her that his head ached.

The hand nearest him hung at her side, and Francis longed to take it in his and press it to his lips and then to lay it on his hot, throbbing forehead.

As if in answer to his unspoken wish, he felt the touch of her cool fingers on his aching head; a moment later she had gone, closing the door gently behind her.

Bellamy started up and held out his arms. "Madge! Madge!" he cried, all his love and his despair because of that love in his voice. But Margaret did not hear, or, if she heard, did not turn back.

Bellamy took his hat and rushed from the room and the house.

XX.

WEARIED physically and not refreshed in mind, Francis returned from his walk as the sunshine fell aslant the grass. On all sides were signs of nature's resurrection. In the distant fields that checkered the hills farmers ploughed and planted, and in the trees the birds sang a jubilant chorus.

Everything—the trees, the moist brown earth, the very air—seemed brimming with fresh, warm life. But to Francis these influences brought no comfort. He was conscious of them all,—the warmth, the beauty, the sweetness of the springtime,—and he felt himself in contrast to be a thing dead, decayed, corrupt.

All was quiet about the house as he approached, and the neatness of the place seemed a rebuke. Lawns and driveway were well kept, and everything about house and grounds showed signs of thrift and care.

On the broad piazza Francis paused and turned to look about him. The county contained no place so well cared for as his, and he had his wife to thank for it. She had taken upon herself the duties of master as well as mistress; he had done naught but despoil what her efforts had made beautiful.

He remembered with a horrible disgust of himself one of the nights when he had been drinking too much and had driven across the lawn, soaked and soft from a recent rain; and another time when his ruthless carriage-wheels had ruined a flower-bed.

Francis dropped listlessly to a seat on the railing of the piazza. He was tired—tired of battling with his love for a woman as far above him as the stars are above the earth they shine upon.

To love a woman and yet not try to win her love! 'Tis not an easy task for a man to set himself. Could he, by trying, make her love him? "When you choose to charm, you have a way about you that must win any woman," someone had said to him. The words came back to him now, but there came to his mind also other words, Margaret's when she had said, "The saddest fate that can befall a woman is to love a man she cannot look up to nor respect." Of course, she had been thinking of Somers.

Francis had heard the words with pity for her; now the remembrance of them stung his very soul. Should he not, even because he loved her, refrain from all attempts to win her heart? She had suffered much because of one unworthy man; all others, if they valued her peace of mind, surely ought to keep themselves out of her path.

Did she love Somers yet? Francis wondered. Ah, what a fool the man had been to throw away the heart of such a woman. If she loved him, if such a miracle could come to pass, what wondrous changes could she not work in him? But even then there would be always between them the past, the irrevocable past.

Francis pulled himself together, sharply impatient at his futile day-dreams, and passed into the hall. There the windows had been thrown open to let in the warm spring air, and through one of them Francis caught glimpses, between the curtains, of the purples and yellows of the pansies in Margaret's window-box and, just beyond, a cherry-tree white with bloom.

The recess inside the window was Margaret's favorite reading-place. A book with a handkerchief between its pages lay there now, on a table beside a bowl of early wild-flowers, and the place seemed redolent of her presence, as though she had just left it.

The library was untenanted, but through the curtained door-way leading to a smaller room Francis heard the sound of voices. He softly pushed aside one of the portières and looked into the room. Margaret was sitting with her back towards him in a low chair by the window, and clinging to her knee was little Robert Grant, a child of one of the neighbors whom Margaret often invited to spend the day with her.

"And did the Princess May love the good Prince?" the boy was saying.

"No, dear," Margaret's voice replied; "the Princess could not love the good Prince Florizel; she had given her heart to Prince Charming, who was a very handsome Prince, but who lived a wicked life. He took no pride in his houses or lands or even in his people, but trampled down the rights of others until there was no one left to love him but the Princess May."

"Prince Charming must have been the baddest man that ever lived," murmured Robert, his big blue eyes fixed thoughtfully upon the distant hills.

"No, dear," said Margaret quickly; "there was just one good thing about him—not such a little thing either; he was not a hypocrite. He never tried to make anyone think him better than he was. And he was truthful, Bobby; he would not tell a lie."

Francis moved back a step and took a long breath, then leaned forward to hear more, scarcely daring to breathe again for fear of betraying his presence.

"Why did the Princess love Prince Charming if he was so bad?" questioned the child in his pretty treble. "Why did she not love the good Prince?"

"I don't know, dear," Margaret answered. There was a note of weariness in her voice, and Francis fancied he heard her sigh. "The Princess did not want to love Prince Charming; she knew he was not worthy of any woman's love, and she despised him for his wickedness. And yet she loved him, she loved him; she could not help it."

Margaret stopped suddenly and went on in another tone. "I am tired, Bobby, so will you run and play now? and I will finish the story for you another day. Only remember, dear," Margaret concluded, softly stroking the boy's hair,—“remember you must try to grow up good as well as strong, and true as well as brave, and then when you find your Princess she will not have to cry because she loves you.”

Francis dropped the curtain and hurried into the hall as swiftly as he dared. He felt choked and stifled, and his heart seemed bursting

in his bosom. He longed to get out-of-doors, where there was room to breathe, space to exult in.

As he left the library he found himself staggering, and leaned against the wall to steady himself, burying his face in his arms. "She loves me! she loves me!" he said softly again and again, and when he raised his head there were tears upon his cheeks.

At the hat-rack he caught up her cape and kissed its folds, and when he came to the table with her book upon it he purloined the handkerchief that lay there. He felt that he must have something belonging to her to crush against his heart.

Outside the house the stir of the day's close blended with the hush of evening. Down to the farthest corner of the lawn Francis hurried and fell upon a rustic seat.

His wife loved him. There was nothing in heaven or earth that could give him greater joy. For the time even his regrets faded before his overwhelming exultation; he was spellbound and breathless with the wonder of it all.

All his senses were awake and quickened, and he was newly conscious of the sights and sounds of spring. The air he breathed was fragrant with newly turned earth and the smell of foliage; the songs of birds and the distant lowing of cattle sounded sweetly in his ears. He felt the spring because there was sunshine in his heart.

XXI.

DARKNESS had fallen but no stars were shining, and the air was damp and chill when Bellamy went into the house again. He found Margaret in the library seated before the wood-fire. But for this fire the room was in darkness.

She had not heard him come in, and Francis paused a moment on the threshold to watch the picture she made in the wavering light, which now and then fell on her face as the flames leapt and danced, intensifying the gloom in the corners beyond their reach.

Francis dropped the curtain and crossed the room to where his wife sat. "Margaret," he said quietly, "do you know that you have made a man of me?"

The woman he addressed did not raise her eyes as she answered in a cold, clear tone: "You are mistaken. You have perhaps made a man of yourself; I do not know. But I have done nothing."

"You have done nothing!" echoed Francis. "Do you think because you have not consciously tried to reform me that your goodness, your sweetness, your generous nature, and noble life have not been potent influences? Could anyone be near you, I wonder, without becoming better, worthier? You believe you have kept the vow you made that day on Riverside Drive; you think it in your power to withhold your

gracious influence. Can a flower, by willing, prevent the air around it from being sweeter for its fragrance? Can the frozen earth out there remain impervious to the subtle forces of spring that silently but surely do their work until the earth that seemed dead and desolate breaks forth in nature's resurrection?

"I struggled against your influence—the more shame to me. I fought it with all the strength of my will, but, Madge, the powers of light were stronger than the powers of darkness. In spite of myself I became, because of you, a better man. You would tell me, I suppose, that you have not so much as lifted a finger to bring all this about. Well, then, without the lifting of a finger you have done the work."

Bellamy stopped speaking and looked down at his wife. As he talked a change had come over her face: it had grown softer, tenderer, but even now she did not raise her eyes as she said simply,—

"I am glad; more glad than I can tell you."

Bellamy started to go to her, but paused half way to say roughly, "Madge, you love me."

His wife sprang to her feet and faced him, in her eyes a look of frightened wonder. Francis went to where she stood and took her in his arms.

"Let me go," she murmured with passionate vehemence, and struggled to free herself, but his hold was firm.

"I shall never let you go," he whispered. "You love me. I overheard your story to that child this afternoon. Do you think I will let you go now?"

The woman in his arms ceased to struggle and became very still. Gently Francis drew her head to his shoulder and lifted her face until her eyes must meet his or close; then he let her go.

Margaret drew herself away and stood with bent head and crimson cheeks. Her husband had seen her in moments of anger splendidly controlled, of scorn given free rein and of sorrow proudly borne, but never had she looked so lovely as now, when, confronted by his accusation of the love she had hidden and tried to banish, she stood, shy and trembling, not knowing what to do or where to turn.

Francis moved a trifle nearer, but he did not touch her again. "When did you first love me?" he demanded.

"I scarcely know," Margaret said softly and shyly.

"When those people were here? Did you love me then? Were you thinking of me and not of Somers when you answered that question in the game?"

Margaret hid her face in her hands, and when Bellamy took the hands away, upon his shoulder.

"Yes, I loved you then," she murmured at last in desperation.

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Francis was pitiless. "The night I kissed you," he said,—“did you love me then?”

Margaret released herself from his embrace. "I will answer no more questions," she cried, her voice half laughter, half tears. "It was that night I first knew that I loved you," she added a moment later.

Bellamy looked at the distance that had widened between them.

"Come here," he commanded.

Why is it that the man whom a woman can wind about her finger as lightly and easily as a skein of silk always loves, in jest, to order her about?

Margaret obediently came back to her husband's side, and this time made no remonstrance as he took her in his arms, a transformed, radiant woman.

With his lips close to hers Francis hesitated. "You have forgiven me that other kiss, my shameless wager—everything?"

He could not hear the "Yes" her lips framed.

"Ah, Madge," he said softly when he had kissed her, "it isn't by trying to make them good that women like you help men; it's by being what you are yourselves."



THE TIME OF THE SINGING OF BIRDS

BY PHOEBE LYDE

SOMETHING in my heart
Stirs and sings,
Longs to learn the art
April brings.

Hark, the wood-thrush note,
Liquid, clear,
While the robin's throat
Answers here.

How can life seem vain,
Hope untrue?
Violets down the lane
Open blue.

See the wind-flower frail,
Near them set;
Did our love once fail?
I forget.

Sorrow disappears,
Winter flies,
Quickened by our tears,
Joys arise.

Bathed in silver showers,
Golden air,
Wakes the world in flowers,
Young and fair.

So my heart is stirred,
Feels its wings,
Careless as a bird,
Soars and sings.

PHILOSOPHY 4

A STORY OF HARVARD UNIVERSITY

By Owen Wister



EIGHTH IN THE SERIES OF COLLEGE TALES

I.

TWO frowning boys sat in their tennis flannels beneath the glare of lamp and gas. Their leather belts were loosened, their soft pink shirts unbuttoned at the collar. They were listening with gloomy voracity to the instruction of a third. They sat at a table bared of its customary sporting ornaments, and from time to time they questioned, sucked their pencils, and scrawled vigorous, laconic notes. Their necks and faces shone with the bloom of out-of-doors. Studious concentration was evidently a painful novelty to their features. Drops of perspiration came one by one from their matted hair, and their hands dampened the paper upon which they wrote. The windows stood open wide to the May darkness, but nothing came in save heat and insects; for spring, being behind time, was making up with a sultry burst at the end, as a delayed train makes the last few miles high above schedule speed. Thus it had been since eight o'clock. Eleven was daintily striking now. Its diminutive sonority might have belonged to some church-bell far distant across the Cambridge silence; but it was on a shelf in the room,—a timepiece of Gallic design, representing Mephistopheles, who caressed the world in his lap. And as the little strokes boomed, eight—nine—ten—eleven, the voice of the instructor steadily continued thus:

"By starting from the Absolute Intelligence, the chief cravings of the reason, after unity and spirituality, receive due satisfaction. Something transcending the Objective becomes possible. In the *Cogito* the relation of subject and object is implied as the primary condition of all knowledge. Now, Plato never——"

"Skip Plato," interrupted one of the boys. "You gave us his points yesterday."

"Yep," assented the other, rattling through the back pages of his notes. "Got Plato down cold somewhere,—oh, here. He never caught on to the subjective, any more than the other Greek bucks. Go on to the next chappie."

"If you gentlemen have mastered the—the Grreek bucks," observed the instructor with sleek intonation, "we——"

"Yep," said the second tennis boy, running a rapid judicial eye over his back notes, "you've put us on to their curves enough. Go on."

The instructor turned a few pages forward in the thick book of his own neat type-written notes and then resumed,—

"The self-knowledge of matter in motion."

"Skip it," put in the first tennis boy.

"We went to those lectures ourselves," explained the second, whirling through another dishevelled note-book. "Oh, yes. Hobbes and his gang. There is only one substance, matter, but it doesn't strictly exist. Bodies exist. We've got Hobbes. Go on."

The instructor went forward a few pages more in his exhaustive volume. He had attended all the lectures but three throughout the year, taking them down in short-hand. Laryngitis had kept him from those three, to which, however, he had sent a stenographic friend, so that the chain was unbroken. He now took up the next philosopher on the list; but his smooth discourse was, after a short while, rudely shaken. It was the second tennis boy questioning severely the doctrines imparted.

"So he says color is all your eye, and shape isn't? and substance isn't?"

"Do you mean he claims," said the first boy, equally resentful, "that if we were all extinguished the world would still be here, only there'd be no difference between blue and pink, for instance?"

"The reason is clear," responded the tutor blandly. He adjusted his eye-glasses, placed their elastic cord behind his ear, and referred to his notes. "It is human sight that distinguishes between colors. If human sight be eliminated from the universe, nothing remains to make the distinction, and consequently there will be none. Thus also is it with sounds. If the universe contains no ear to hear the sound, the sound has no existence."

"Why?" said both the tennis boys at once.

The tutor smiled. "Is it not clear," said he, "that there can be no sound if it is not heard?"

"No," they both returned, "not in the least clear."

"It's clear enough what he's driving at, of course," pursued the first boy. "Until the waves of sound or light or what not hit us through our senses, our brains don't experience the sensations of sound or light or what not, and so, of course, we can't know about them—not until they reach us."

"Precisely," said the tutor. He had a suave and slightly alien accent.

"Well, just tell me how that proves a thunderstorm in a desert island makes no noise."

"If a thing is inaudible——" began the tutor.

"That's mere juggling!" vociferated the boy. "That's merely the same kind of toy-shop brain-trick you gave us out of Greek philosophy yesterday. They said there was no such thing as motion because at every instant of time the moving body had to be somewhere, so how could it get anywhere else? Good Lord! I can make up foolishness like that myself. For instance: A moving body can never stop. Why? Why, because at every instant of time it must be going at a certain rate, so how can it ever get slower? Pooh!" He stopped. He had been gesticulating with one hand, which he now jammed wrathfully into his pocket.

The tutor must have derived great pleasure from his own smile, for he prolonged and deepened and variously modified it, while his shiny little calculating eyes travelled from one to the other of his ruddy scholars. He coughed, consulted his notes, and went through all the paces of superiority. "I can find nothing about a body's being unable to stop," said he gently. "If logic makes no appeal to you, gentlemen——"

"Oh, bunch!" exclaimed the second tennis boy in the slang of his period, which was the early eighties. "Look here. Color has no existence outside of our brain—that's the idea?"

The tutor bowed.

"And sound hasn't? and smell hasn't? and taste hasn't?"

The tutor had repeated his little bow after each.

"And that's because they depend on our senses? Very well. But he claims solidity and shape and distance do exist independently of us. If we all died, they'd be here just the same, though the others wouldn't. A flower would go on growing, but it would stop smelling. Very well. Now you tell me how we ascertain solidity. By the touch, don't we? Then, if there was nobody to touch an object, what then? Seems to me touch is just as much of a sense as your nose is." (He meant no personality, but the first boy choked a giggle as the speaker hotly followed up his thought.) "Seems to me by his reasoning that in a desert island there'd be nothing at all—smells or shapes—not even an island. Seems to me that's what you call logic."

The tutor directed his smile at the open window. "Berkeley——" said he.

"By Jove!" said the other boy, not heeding him, "and here's another point: If color is entirely in my brain, why don't that ink-bottle and this shirt look alike to me? They ought to. And why don't a Martini cocktail and a cup of coffee taste the same to my tongue?"

"Berkeley," attempted the tutor, "demonstrates——"

"Do you mean to say," the boy rushed on, "that there is no external quality in all these things which when it meets my perceptions compels me to see differences?"

The tutor surveyed his notes. "I can discover no such suggestions here as you are pleased to make," said he. "But your original researches," he continued most obsequiously, "recall our next subject,—Berkeley and the Idealists." And he smoothed out his notes.

"Let's see," said the second boy, pondering; "I went to two or three lectures about that time. Berkeley—Berkeley. Didn't he—oh, yes! he did. He went the whole hog. Nothing's anywhere except in your ideas. You think the table's there, but it isn't. There isn't any table."

The first boy slapped his leg and lighted a cigarette. "I remember," said he. "Amounts to this: If I were to stop thinking about you, you'd evaporate."

"Which is balls," observed the second boy judicially, again in the slang of his period, "and can be proved so. For you're not always thinking about me, and I've never evaporated once."

The first boy, after a slight wink at the second, addressed the tutor. "Supposing you were to happen to forget yourself," said he to that sleek gentleman, "would you evaporate?"

The tutor turned his little eyes doubtfully upon the tennis boys, but answered, reciting the language of his notes: "The idealistic theory does not apply to the thinking ego, but to the world of external phenomena. The world exists in our conception of it."

"Then," said the second boy, "when a thing is inconceivable?"

"It has no existence," replied the tutor complacently.

"But a billion dollars is inconceivable," retorted the boy. "No mind can take in a sum of that size; but it exists."

"Put that down! put that down!" shrieked the other boy. "You've struck something. If we get Berkeley on the paper, I'll run that in." He wrote rapidly, and then took a turn around the room, frowning as he walked. "The actuality of a thing," said he, summing his clever thoughts up, "is not disproved by its being inconceivable. Ideas alone depend upon thought for their existence. There! Anybody can get off stuff like that by the yard." He picked up a cork and a foot-rule, tossed the cork, and sent it flying out of the window with the foot-rule.

"Skip Berkeley," said the other boy. "How much more is there?"

"Necessary and accidental truths," answered the tutor, reading the subjects from his notes. "Hume and the causal law. The duality, or multiplicity, of the ego."

"The hard-boiled ego," commented the boy with the ruler; and he batted a swooping June-bug into space.

"Sit down, idiot," said his sprightly mate.

Conversation ceased. Instruction went forward. Their pencils worked. The causal law, etc., went into their condensed notes like Liebig's extract of beef, and drops of perspiration continued to trickle from their matted hair.

II.

BERTIE and Billy were sophomores. They had been alive for twenty years, and were young. Their tutor was also a sophomore. He too had been alive for twenty years, but never yet had become young. Bertie and Billy had colonial names (Rogers, I think, and Schuyler), but the tutor's name was Oscar Maironi, and he was charging his pupils five dollars an hour each for his instruction. Do not think this excessive. Oscar could have tutored a whole class of irresponsibles, and by that arrangement have earned probably more; but Bertie and Billy had pre-empted him on account of his fame for high standing and accuracy, and they could well afford it. All three sophomores alike had happened to choose Philosophy 4 as one of their elective courses, and all alike were now face to face with the Day of Judgment. The final examinations had begun. Oscar could lay his hand upon his studious heart and await the Day of Judgment like—I had nearly said a Christian! His notes were full: Three hundred pages about Zeno and Parmenides and the rest, almost every word as it had come from the professor's lips. And his memory was full too, flowing like a player's lines. With the right cue he could recite instantly: "An important application of this principle, with obvious reference to Heracleitos, occurs in Aristotle, who says——" He could do this with the notes anywhere. I am sure you appreciate Oscar and his great power of acquiring facts. So he was ready, like the wise virgins of parable. Bertie and Billy did not put one in mind of virgins: although they had burned considerable midnight oil, it had not been to throw light upon Philosophy 4. In them the mere word Heracleitos had raised a chill no later than yesterday,—the chill of the unknown. They had not attended the lectures on the "Greek bucks." Indeed, profiting by their privilege of voluntary recitations, they had dropped in but seldom on Philosophy 4. These blithe grasshoppers had danced and sung away the precious storing season, and now that the bleak hour of examinations was upon them, their waked-up hearts had felt aghast at the sudden vision of their ignorance. It was on a Monday noon that this feeling came fully upon them, as they read over the names of the philosophers. Thursday was the day of the examination. "Who's Anaxagoras?" Billy had inquired of Bertie. "I'll tell you," said Bertie, "if you'll tell me who Epicharmos of Kos was." And upon this they embraced with helpless laughter. Then they reckoned up the hours left for them to learn Epicharmos of Kos in,—between Monday noon and Thursday morning at nine,—and their quailing chill increased. A tutor must be called in at once. So the

grasshoppers, having money, sought out and quickly purchased the ant.

Closeted with Oscar and his notes, they had, as Bertie put it, salted down the early Greek bucks by seven on Monday evening. By the same midnight they had, as Billy expressed it, called the turn on Plato. Tuesday was a second day of concentrated swallowing. Oscar had taken them through the thought of many centuries. There had been intermissions for lunch and dinner only; and the weather was exceedingly hot. The pale-skinned Oscar stood this strain better than the unaccustomed Bertie and Billy. Their jovial eyes had grown hollow to-night, although their minds were going gallantly, as you have probably noticed. Their criticisms, slangy and abrupt, struck the scholastic Oscar as flippancies which he must indulge, since the pay was handsome. That these idlers should jump in with doubts and questions not contained in his sacred notes raised in him feelings betrayed just once in that remark about "original rresearch."

"Nine—ten—eleven—twelve," went the little timepiece; and Oscar rose.

"Gentlemen," he said, closing the sacred notes, "we have finished the causal law."

"That's the whole business except the ego racket, isn't it?" said Billy.

"The duality, or multiplicity, of the ego remains," Oscar replied.

"Oh, I know its name. It ought to be a soft snap after what we've had."

"Unless it's full of dates and names you've got to know," said Bertie.

"Don't believe it is," Billy answered. "I heard him at it once." (This meant that Billy had gone to a lecture lately.) "It's all about Who am I? and How do I do it?" Billy added.

"Hm!" said Bertie. "Hm! Subjective and objective again, I suppose, only applied to oneself. You see, that table is objective. I can stand off and judge it. It's outside of me; has nothing to do with me. That's easy. But my opinion of—well, my—well, anything in my nature——"

"Anger when it's time to get up," suggested Billy.

"An excellent illustration," said Bertie. "That is subjective in me. Similar to your dislike of water as a beverage. That is subjective in you. But here comes the twist. I can think of my own anger and judge it, just as if it were an outside thing, like the table. I can compare it with itself on different mornings or with other people's anger. And I trust that you can do the same with your thirst."

"Yes," said Billy; "I recognize that it is greater at times and less at others."

"Very well. There you are. Duality of the ego."

"Subject and object," said Billy. "Perfectly true, and very queer when you try to think of it. Wonder how far it goes? Of course, one can explain the body's being an object to the brain inside it. That's mind and matter over again. But when my own mind and thought can become objects to themselves—I wonder how far that does go?" he broke off musingly. "What useless stuff!" he ended.

"Gentlemen," said Oscar, who had been listening to them with patient, Oriental diversion, "I——"

"Oh," said Bertie, remembering him. "Look here. We mustn't keep you up. We're awfully obliged for the way you are putting us on to this. You're saving our lives. Ten to-morrow for a grand review of the whole course."

"And the multiplicity of the ego?" inquired Oscar.

"Oh, I forgot. Well, it's too late to-night. Is it much? Are there many dates and names and things?"

"It is more of a general inquiry and analysis," replied Oscar. "But it is forty pages of my notes." And he smiled.

"Well, look here. It would be nice to have to-morrow clear for review. We're not tired. You leave us your notes and go to bed."

Oscar's hand almost moved to cover and hold his precious property, for this instinct was the deepest in him. But it did not so move, because his intelligence controlled his instinct nearly, though not quite, always. His shiny little eyes, however, became furtive and antagonistic—something the boys did not at first make out.

Oscar gave himself a moment of silence. "I could not break my rule," said he then. "I do not ever leave my notes with anybody. Mr. Woodridge asked for my History 3 notes, and Mr. Bailey wanted my notes for Fine Arts 1, and I could not let them have them. If Mr. Woodridge was to hear——"

"But what in the dickens are you afraid of?"

"Well, gentlemen, I would rather not. You would take good care, I know, but there are sometimes things which happen that we cannot help. One time a fire——"

At this racial suggestion both boys made the room joyous with mirth. Oscar stood uneasily contemplating them. He would never be able to understand them, not as long as he lived, nor they him. When their mirth was over he did somewhat better, but it was tardy. You see, he was not a specimen of the first rank, or he would have said at once what he said now: "I wish to study my notes a little myself, gentlemen."

"Go along, Oscar, with your inflammable notes, go along!" said Bertie, in supreme good-humor. "And we'll meet to-morrow at ten—if there hasn't been a fire. Better keep your notes in the bath, Oscar."

In as much haste as could be made with a good appearance, Oscar buckled his volume in its leather cover, gathered his hat and pencil, and, bidding his pupils a very good-night, sped smoothly out of the room.

III.

OSCAR MAIRONI was very poor. His thin gray suit in summer resembled his thick gray suit in winter. It does not seem that he had more than two; but he had a black coat and waistcoat, and a narrow-brimmed, shiny hat to go with these, and one pair of patent-leather shoes that laced, and whose long soles curved upward at the toe like the rockers of a summer-hotel chair. These holiday garments served him in all seasons; and when you saw him dressed in them, and seated in a car bound for Park Square, you knew he was going into Boston, where he would read manuscript essays on Botticelli or Pico della Mirandola, or manuscript translations of Armenian folk-songs; read these to ecstatic, dim-eyed ladies in Newbury Street, who would pour him cups of tea when it was over, and speak of his earnestness after he was gone. It did not do the ladies any harm; but I am not sure that it was the best thing for Oscar. It helped him feel every day, as he stepped along to recitations with his elbow clamping his books against his ribs and his heavy black curls bulging down from his gray slouch hat to his collar, how meritorious he was compared with Bertie and Billy—with all Berties and Billies. He may have been. Who shall say? But I will say at once that chewing the cud of one's own virtue gives a sour stomach.

Bertie's and Billy's parents owned town- and country-houses in New York. The parents of Oscar had come over in the steerage. Money filled the pockets of Bertie and Billy; therefore were their heads empty of money and full of less cramping thoughts. Oscar had fallen upon the reverse of this fate. Calculation was his second nature. He had given his education to himself; he had for its sake toiled, traded, outwitted, and saved. He had sent himself to college, where most of the hours not given to education and more education, went to toiling and more toiling, that he might pay his meagre way through the college world. He had a cheaper room and ate cheaper meals than was necessary. He tutored, and he wrote college specials for several newspapers. His chief relaxation was the praise of the ladies in Newbury Street. These told him of the future which awaited him, and when they gazed upon his features were put in mind of the dying Keats. Not that Oscar was going to die in the least. Life burned strong in him. There were sly times when he took what he had saved by his cheap meals and room and went to Boston with it, and for a few hours thoroughly ceased being ascetic. Yet Oscar felt meritorious when he considered Bertie and Billy; for, like the socialists, merit with him meant not being able to

live as well as your neighbor. You will think that I have given to Oscar what is familiarly termed a black eye. But I was once inclined to applaud his struggle for knowledge, until I studied him close and perceived that his love was not for the education he was getting, but for the getting it, the accumulating more and more and more. So there is no black eye about it. Pity Oscar if you like; but don't be so mushy as to admire him as he stepped along in the night, holding his notes, full of his knowledge, thinking of Bertie and Billy, conscious of virtue, and smiling his smile.

They were not conscious of any virtue, were Bertie and Billy, nor were they smiling. They were solemnly eating up together a box of handsome strawberries and sucking the juice from their reddened thumbs.

"Rather mean not to make him wait and have some of these after his hard work on us," said Bertie. "I'd forgotten about them."

"He ran out before you could remember, anyway," said Billy.

"Wasn't he absurd about his old notes?" Bertie went on, a new strawberry in his mouth. "We don't need them, though. With to-morrow we'll get this course down cold."

"Yes, to-morrow," sighed Billy. "It's awful to think of another day of this kind."

"Horrible," assented Bertie.

"He knows a lot. He's extraordinary," said Billy.

"Yes, he is. He can talk the actual words of the notes. Probably he could teach the course himself. I don't suppose he buys any strawberries, even when they get ripe and cheap here. What's the matter with you?"

Billy had broken suddenly into merriment. "I don't believe Oscar owns a bath," he explained.

"By Jove! so his notes will burn in spite of everything!" And both of the tennis boys shrieked foolishly.

Then Billy began taking his clothes off, strewing them in the window-seat or anywhere that they happened to drop; and Bertie, after hitting another cork or two out of the window with the tennis racket, departed to his own room on another floor and left Billy to immediate and deep slumber. This was broken for a few moments when Billy's roommate returned happy from an excursion which had begun in the morning.

The roommate sat on Billy's feet until that gentleman showed consciousness.

"I've done it," said the roommate, then.

"The hell you have!"

"You couldn't do it."

"The hell I couldn't!"

"Great dinner."

"The hell it was!"

"Soft-shell crabs, broiled live lobster, salmon, grass-plover, dough-birds, rum omelette. Bet you five dollars you can't find it."

"Take you. Go to bed." And Billy fell again into deep, immediate slumber.

The roommate went out into the sitting-room, and noting the signs there of the hard work which had gone on during his absence, was glad that he did not take Philosophy 4. He was soon asleep also.

IV.

BILLY got up early. As he plunged into his cold bath he envied his roommate, who could remain at rest indefinitely, while his own hard lot was hurrying him to prayers and breakfast and Oscar's inexorable notes. He sighed once more as he looked at the beauty of the new morning and felt its air upon his cheeks. He and Bertie belonged to the same club-table, and they met there mournfully over the oatmeal. This very hour to-morrow would see them eating their last before the examination in Philosophy 4. And nothing pleasant was going to happen between,—nothing that they could dwell upon with the slightest satisfaction. Nor had their sleep entirely refreshed them. Their eyes were not quite right, and their hair, though it was brushed, showed fatigue of the nerves in a certain inclination to limpness and disorder.

"Epicharmos of Kos
Was covered with moss,"

remarked Billy.

"Thales and Zeno
Were duffers at keno,"

added Bertie.

In the hours of trial they would often express their education thus.

"Philosophers I have met," murmured Billy with scorn. And they ate silently for some time.

"There's one thing that's valuable," said Bertie next. "When they spring those tricks on you about the flying arrow not moving, and all the rest, and prove it all right by logic, you learn what pure logic amounts to when it cuts loose from common sense. And Oscar thinks it's immense. We shocked him."

"He's found the Bird-in-Hand!" cried Billy quite suddenly.

"Oscar?" said Bertie with an equal shout.

"No, John. John has. Came home last night and waked me up and told me."

"Good for John," remarked Bertie pensively.

Now, to the undergraduate mind of that day the Bird-in-Hand tavern was what the golden fleece used to be to the Greeks,—a sort of shining, remote, miraculous thing, difficult though not impossible to find, for which expeditions were fitted out. It was reported to be somewhere in the direction of Quincy, and in one respect it resembled a ghost: you never saw a man who had seen it himself; it was always his cousin, or his elder brother in '79. But for the successful explorer a dinner and wines were waiting at the Bird-in-Hand more delicious than anything outside of Paradise. You will realize, therefore, what a thing it was to have a roommate who had attained. If Billy had not been so dog-tired last night, he would have sat up and made John tell him everything from beginning to end.

"Soft-shell crabs, broiled live lobster, salmon, grass-plover, dough-birds, and rum omelette," he was now reciting to Bertie.

"They say the rum there is old Jamaica brought in slave-ships," said Bertie reverently.

"I've heard he has white port of 1820," said Billy; "and claret, and champagne."

Bertie looked out of the window. "This is the finest day there's been," said he. Then he looked at his watch. It was twenty-five minutes before Oscar. Then he looked Billy hard in the eye. "Have you any sand?" he inquired.

It was a challenge to Billy's manhood. "Sand!" he yelled, sitting up.

Both of them in an instant had left the table and bounded out of the house.

"I'll meet you at Pike's," said Billy to Bertie. "Make him give us the black gelding."

"Might as well bring our notes along," Bertie called after his rushing friend; "and get John to tell you the road."

To see their haste, as the two fled in opposite directions upon their errands, you would have supposed them under some crying call of obligation, or else to be escaping from justice.

Twenty minutes later, they were seated behind the black gelding and bound on their journey in search of the Bird-in-Hand. Their notes in Philosophy 4 were stowed under the buggy-seat.

"Did Oscar see you?" Bertie inquired.

"Not he," cried Billy joyously.

"Oscar will wonder," said Bertie; and he gave the black gelding a triumphant touch with the whip.

You see, it was Oscar that had made them run so; or, rather, it was Duty and Fate walking in Oscar's displeasing likeness. Nothing easier, nothing more reasonable, than to see the tutor and tell him they should not need him to-day. But that would have spoiled everything.

They did not know it, but deep in their child-like hearts was a delicious sense that in thus unaccountably disappearing they had won a great game, had got away ahead of Duty and Fate. After all, it did bear some resemblance to an escape from justice.

Could he have known this, Oscar would have felt more superior than ever. Punctually at the hour agreed, ten o'clock, he rapped at Billy's door and stood waiting, his leather wallet of notes nipped safe between elbow and ribs. Then he knocked again. Then he tried the door, and as it was open, he walked deferentially into the sitting-room. Sonorous snores came from one of the bedrooms. Oscar peered in and saw John; but he saw no Billy in the other bed. Then, always deferential, he sat down in the sitting-room and watched a couple of prettily striped coats hanging in a half-open closet.

At that moment the black gelding was flirtaciously crossing the drawbridge over the Charles on the Allston Road. The gelding knew the clank of those suspending chains and the slight unsteadiness of the meeting halves of the bridge as well as it knew oats. But it could not enjoy its own entirely premeditated surprise quite so much as Bertie and Billy were enjoying their entirely unpremeditated flight from Oscar. The wind rippled on the water; down at the boat-house Smith was helping someone embark in a single scull; they saw the green meadows towards Brighton; their foreheads felt cool and unvexed, and each new minute had the savor of fresh forbidden fruit.

"How do we go?" said Bertie.

"I forgot I had a bet with John until I had waked him," said Billy. "He bet me five last night I couldn't find it, and I took him. Of course, after that I had no right to ask him anything, and he thought I was funny. He said I couldn't find out if the landlady's hair was her own. I went him another five on that."

"How do you say we ought to go?" said Bertie presently.

"Quincy, I'm sure."

They were now crossing the Albany tracks at Allston. "We're going to get there," said Bertie; and he turned the black gelding towards Brookline and Jamaica Plain.

The enchanting day surrounded them. The suburban houses, even the suburban street-cars, seemed part of one great universal plan of enjoyment. Pleasantness so radiated from the boys' faces and from their general appearance of clean white flannel trousers and soft clean shirts of pink and blue that a driver on a passing car leaned to look after them with a smile and a butcher hailed them with loud brotherhood from his cart. They turned a corner, and from a long way off came the sight of the tower of Memorial Hall. Plain above all intervening tenements and foliage it rose. Over there beneath its shadow were examinations and Oscar. It caught Billy's roving eye, and he

nudged Bertie, pointing silently to it. "Ha, ha!" sang Bertie. And beneath his light whip the gelding sprang forward into its stride.

The clocks of Massachusetts struck eleven. Oscar rose doubtfully from his chair in Billy's study. Again he looked into Billy's bedroom and at the empty bed. Then he went for a moment and watched the still forcibly sleeping John. He turned his eyes this way and that, and after standing for a while moved quietly back to his chair and sat down with the leather wallet of notes on his lap, his knees together and his unblackened shoes touching. In due time the clocks of Massachusetts struck noon.

In a meadow where a brown amber stream ran lay Bertie and Billy on the grass. Their summer coats were off. Their belts loosened. They watched with eyes half closed the long water-weeds moving gently as the current waved and twined them. The black gelding, brought along a farm-road and through a gate, waited at its ease in the field beside a stone wall. Now and then it stretched and cropped a young leaf from a vine that grew over the wall, and now and then the warm wind brought down the fruit-blossoms all over the meadow. They fell from the tree where Bertie and Billy lay, and the boys brushed them from their faces. Not very far away was Blue Hill, softly shining; and crows high up in the air came from it occasionally across here.

By one o'clock a change had come in Billy's room. Oscar during that hour had opened his satchel of philosophy upon his lap and read his notes attentively. Being almost word perfect in many parts of them, he now spent his unexpected leisure in acquiring accurately the language of still further paragraphs. "The sharp line of demarcation which Descartes drew between consciousness and the material world," whispered Oscar with satisfaction, and knew that if Descartes were on the examination paper he could start with this and go on for nearly twenty lines before he would have to use any words of his own. As he memorized, the chamber-maid, who had come to do the bedrooms three times already and had gone away again, now returned and no longer restrained her indignation. "Get up, Mr. Blake!" she vociferated to the sleeping John; "you ought to be ashamed!" And she shook the bedstead. Thus John had come to rise and discover Oscar. The patient tutor explained himself as John listened in his pyjamas.

"Why, I'm sorry," said he, "but I don't believe they'll get back very soon."

"They have gone away?" asked Oscar sharply.

"Ah—yes," returned the reticent John. "An unexpected matter of importance."

"But, my dear sir, those gentlemen know nothing! Philosophy 4 is to-morrow, and they know nothing."

"They'll have to stand it, then," said John, with a grin.

"And my time. I am waiting here. I am engaged to teach them. I have been waiting here since ten. They engaged me all day and this evening."

"I don't believe there's the slightest use in your waiting now, you know. They'll probably let you know when they come back."

"Probably! But they have engaged my time. The girl knows I was here ready at ten. I call you to witness that you found me waiting, ready at any time."

John in his pyjamas stared at Oscar. "Why, of course they'll pay you the whole thing," said he coldly; "stay here if you prefer." And he went into the bathroom and closed the door.

The tutor stood awhile, holding his notes and turning his little eyes this way and that. His young days had been dedicated to getting the better of his neighbor, because otherwise his neighbor would get the better of him. Oscar had never suspected the existence of boys like John and Bertie and Billy. He stood holding his notes, and then, buckling them up once more, he left the room with evidently reluctant steps. It was at this time that the clocks struck one.

In their field among the soft new grass sat Bertie and Billy some ten yards apart, each with his back against an apple-tree. Each had his notes and took his turn at questioning the other. Thus the names of the Greek philosophers with their dates and doctrines were shouted gayly in the meadow. The foreheads of the boys were damp to-day, as they had been last night, and their shirts were opened to the air; but it was the sun that made them hot now, and no lamp or gas; and already they looked twice as alive as they had looked at breakfast. There they sat, while their memories gripped the summarized list of facts essential, facts to be known accurately; the simple, solid, raw facts, which, should they happen to come on the examination paper, no skill could evade nor any imagination supply. But this study was no longer dry and dreadful to them: they had turned it to a sporting event. "What about Heracleitos?" Billy as catechist would put at Bertie. "Eternal flux," Bertie would correctly snap back at Billy. Or, if he got it mixed up, and replied, "Everything is water," which was the doctrine of another Greek, then Billy would credit himself with twenty-five cents on a piece of paper. Each ran a memorandum of this kind; and you can readily see how spirited a character metaphysics would assume under such conditions.

"I'm going in," said Bertie suddenly, as Billy was crediting himself with a fifty-cent gain. "What's your score?"

"Two seventy-five, counting your break on Parmenides. It'll be cold."

"No, it won't. Well, I'm only a quarter behind you." And Bertie

pulled off his shoes. Soon he splashed into the stream where the bend made a hole of some depth.

"Cold?" inquired Billy on the bank.

Bertie closed his eyes dreamily. "Delicious," said he, and sank luxuriously beneath the surface with slow strokes.

Billy had his clothes off in a moment, and, taking the plunge, screamed loudly. "You liar!" he yelled, as he came up. And he made for Bertie.

Delight rendered Bertie weak and helpless; he was caught and ducked; and after some vigorous wrestling both came out of the icy water.

"Now we've got no towels, you fool," said Billy.

"Use your notes," said Bertie, and he rolled in the grass. Then they chased each other round the apple-trees, and the black gelding watched them by the wall, its ears well forward.

While they were dressing they discovered it was half-past one, and became instantly famished. "We should have brought lunch along," they told each other. But they forgot that no such thing as lunch could have induced them to delay their escape from Cambridge for a moment this morning. "What do you suppose Oscar is doing now?" Billy inquired of Bertie, as they led the black gelding back to the road; and Bertie laughed like an infant. "Gentlemen," said he, in Oscar's manner, "we now approach the multiplicity of the ego." The black gelding must have thought it had humorists to deal with this day.

Oscar, as a matter of fact, was eating his cheap lunch away over in Cambridge. There was cold mutton, and boiled potatoes with hard brown spots in them, and large pickled cucumbers; and the salt was damp and would not shake out through the holes in the top of the bottle. But Oscar ate two helps of everything with a good appetite, and betweenwhiles looked at his notes, which lay open beside him on the table. At the stroke of two he was again knocking at his pupils' door. But no answer came. John had gone away somewhere for indefinite hours and the door was locked. So Oscar wrote: "Called, two P.M.," on a scrap of envelope, signed his name, and put it through the letter-slit. It crossed his mind to hunt other pupils for his vacant time, but he decided against this at once, and returned to his own room. Three o'clock found him back at the door, knocking scrupulously. The idea of performing his side of the contract, of tendering his goods and standing ready at all times to deliver them, was in his commercially mature mind. This time he had brought a neat piece of paper with him, and wrote upon it, "Called, three P.M.," and signed it as before, and departed to his room with a sense of fulfilled obligations.

Bertie and Billy had lunched at Mattapan quite happily on cold ham, cold pie, and doughnuts. Mattapan, being accustomed to such

lilies of the field, stared at their clothes and general glory, but observed that they could eat the native bill-of-fare as well as anybody. They found some good, cool beer, moreover, and spoke to several people of the Bird-in-Hand, and got several answers: for instance, that the Bird-in-Hand was at Hingham; that it was at Nantasket; that they had better inquire for it at South Braintree; that they had passed it a mile back; and that there was no such place. If you would gauge the intelligence of our population, inquire your way in a rural neighborhood. With these directions they took up their journey after an hour and a half, a halt made chiefly for the benefit of the black gelding, whom they looked after as much as they did themselves. For awhile they discussed club matters seriously, as both of them were officers of certain organizations, chosen so on account of their recognized executive gifts. These questions settled, they resumed the lighter theme of philosophy, and made it (as Billy observed) a near thing for the Causal Law. But as they drove along, their minds left this topic on the abrupt discovery that the sun was getting down out of the sky, and they asked each other where they were and what they should do. They pulled up at some cross-roads and debated this with growing uneasiness. Behind them lay the way to Cambridge,—not very clear, to be sure; but you could always go where you had come from, Billy seemed to think. He asked, "How about Cambridge and a little Oscar to finish off with?" Bertie frowned. This would be failure. Was Billy willing to go back and face John the successful?

"It would only cost me five dollars," said Billy.

"Ten," Bertie corrected. He recalled to Billy the matter about the landlady's hair.

"By Jove, that's so!" cried Billy, brightening. It seemed conclusive. But he grew cloudy again the next moment. He was of opinion that one could go too far in a thing.

"Where's your sand?" said Bertie.

Billy made an unseemly rejoinder, but even in the making was visited by inspiration. He saw the whole thing as it really was. "By Jove!" said he, "we couldn't get back in time for dinner."

"There's my bonny boy!" said Bertie with pride; and he touched up the black gelding. Uneasiness had left both of them. Cambridge was manifestly impossible; an error in judgment; food compelled them to seek the Bird-in-Hand. "We'll try Quincy anyhow," Bertie said. Billy suggested that they inquire of people on the road. This provided a new sporting event: they could bet upon the answers. Now, the roads, not populous at noon, had grown solitary in the sweetness of the long twilight. Voices of birds there were; and little, black, quick brooks, full to the margin-grass, shot under the roadway through low bridges. Through the web of young foliage the sky shone saffron, and

frogs piped in the meadow-swamps. No cart or carriage appeared, however, and the bets languished. Bertie, driving with one hand, was buttoning his coat with the other, when the black gelding leaped from the middle of the road to the turf and took to backing. The buggy reeled; but the driver was skilful, and fifteen seconds of whip and presence of mind brought it out smoothly. Then the cause of all this spoke to them from a gate.

"Come as near spillin' as you boys wanted, I guess," remarked the cause. They looked, and saw him in huge white shirt-sleeves, shaking with joviality. "If you kep' at it long enough, you might a'most learn to drive a horse," he continued, eying Bertie. This came as near direct praise as the true son of our soil—Northern or Southern—often thinks well of. Bertie was pleased, but made a modest observation, and "Are we near the tavern?" he asked. "Bird-in-Hand!" the son of the soil echoed; and he contemplated them from his gate. "That's me," he stated with complacency. "Bill Diggs of the Bird-in-Hand has been me since April, '65." His massy hair had been yellow, his broad body must have weighed two hundred and fifty pounds, his wide face was canny, red, and somewhat clerical, resembling Henry Ward Beecher's. "Trout," he said, pointing to a basket by the gate. "For your dinner." Then he climbed heavily but skilfully down and picked up the basket and a rod. "Folks round here say," said he, "that there ain't no more trout up them meadows. They've been a-sayin' that since '74; and I've been a-sayin' it myself, when judicious." Here he shook slightly and opened the basket. "Twelve," he said. "Sixteen yesterday. Now you go along and turn in the first right-hand turn, and I'll be up with you soon. Maybe you might make room for the trout." Room for him as well, they assured him; they were in luck to find him, they explained. "Well, I guess I'll trust my neck with you," he said to Bertie, the skilful driver; "'tain't five minutes' risk." The buggy leaned, and its springs bent as he climbed in, wedging his mature bulk between their slim shapes. The gelding looked round the shaft at them. "Protestin', are you?" he said to it. "These light-weight stoddents spile you!" So the gelding went on, expressing, however, by every line of its body a sense of outraged justice. The boys related their difficult search, and learned that any mention of the name of Diggs would have brought them straight. "Bill Diggs of the Bird-in-Hand was my father, and my grandf'ther, and his father; and has been me sence I come back from the war and took the business in '65. I'm not commonly to be met out this late. About fifteen minutes earlier is my time for gettin' back, unless I'm plannin' for a jamboree. But to-night I got to settin' and watchin' that sunset, and listenin' to a darned red-winged blackbird, and I guess Mrs. Diggs has decided to expect me somewheres about noon to-morrow or Friday. Say, did Johnnie send

you?" When he found that John had in a measure been responsible for their journey, he filled with gayety. "Oh, Johnnie's a bird!" said he. "He's that demure on first appearance. Walked in last evening and wanted dinner. Did he tell you what he ate? Guess he left out what he drank. Yes, he's demure."

You might suppose that upon their landlord's safe and sober return fifteen minutes late, instead of on the expected noon of Thursday or Friday, their landlady would show signs of pleasure; but Mrs. Diggs from the porch threw an uncordial eye at the three arriving in the buggy. Here were two more like Johnnie of last night. She knew them by the clothes they wore and by the confidential tones of her husband's voice as he chatted to them. He had been old enough to know better for twenty years. But for twenty years he had taken the same extreme joy in the company of Johnnies, and they were bad for his health. Her final proof that they belonged to this hated breed was when Mr. Diggs thumped the trout down on the porch, and after briefly remarking, "Half of 'em boiled, and half broiled with bacon," himself led away the gelding to the stable instead of entrusting it to his man Silas.

"You may set in the parlor," said Mrs. Diggs, and departed stiffly with the basket of trout.

"It's false," said Billy at once.

Bertie did not grasp his thought.

"Her hair," said Billy. And certainly it was an unusual-looking arrangement.

Presently, as they sat near a parlor organ in the presence of earnest family portraits, Bertie made a new poem for Billy,—

"Said Aristotle unto Plato,
Have another sweet potato?"

And Billy responded,—

"Said Plato unto Aristotle,
Thank you, I prefer the bottle."

"In here, are you?" said their beaming host at the door. "Now, I think you'd find my department of the premises cosier, so to speak." He nudged Bertie. "Do you boys guess it's too early in the season for a silver-fizz?"

We must not wholly forget Oscar in Cambridge. During the afternoon he had not failed in his punctuality; two more neat witnesses to this lay on the door-mat beneath the letter-slit of Billy's room. And at the appointed hour after dinner a third joined them, making five. John found these cards when he came home to go to bed, and picked them up and stuck them ornamentally in Billy's looking-glass as a

greeting when Billy should return. The eight o'clock visit was the last that Oscar paid to the locked door. He remained through the evening in his own room, studious, contented, unventilated, indulging in his thick notes, and also in the thought of Billy's and Bertie's eleventh-hour scholarship. "Even with another day," he told himself, "those young men could not have got fifty per cent." In those times this was the passing mark. To-day I believe that you get an A, or a B, or some other letter denoting your rank. In due time Oscar turned out his gas and got into his bed; and the clocks of Massachusetts struck midnight.

Mrs. Diggs of the Bird-in-Hand had retired at eleven, furious with rage, but firm in dignity in spite of a sudden misadventure. Her hair, being the subject of a sporting event, had remained steadily fixed in Billy's mind,—steadily fixed throughout an entertainment which began at an early hour to assume the features of a celebration. One silver-fizz before dinner is nothing; but dinner did not come at once, and the boys were thirsty. The hair of Mrs. Diggs had caught Billy's eye again immediately upon her entrance to inform them that the meal was ready; and whenever she reëntered with a new course from the kitchen Billy's eye wandered back to it, although Mr. Diggs had become full of anecdotes about the Civil War. It was partly Grecian: a knot stood out behind to a considerable distance. But this was not the whole plan. From front to back ran a parting, clear and severe, and curls fell from this to the temples in a manner called, I believe, by the enlightened, *à la Anne d'Autriche*. The color was gray, to be sure; but this propriety did not save the structure from Billy's increasing observation. As bottles came to stand on the table in greater numbers, the closer and the more solemnly did Billy continue to follow the movements of Mrs. Diggs. They would without doubt have noticed him and his foreboding gravity but for Mr. Diggs's experiences in the Civil War.

The repast was finished—so far as the eating went. Mrs. Diggs with changeless dudgeon was removing and washing the dishes. At the revellers' elbows stood the 1820 port in its fine, fat old dingy bottle, going pretty fast. Mr. Diggs was nearing the end of Antietam. "That morning of the 18th, while McClellan was holdin' us squattin' and cussin'," he was saying to Bertie, when some sort of shuffling sound in the corner caught their attention. We can never know how it happened. Billy ought to know, but does not, and Mrs. Diggs allowed no subsequent reference to the casualty. But there she stood with her entire hair at right angles. The Grecian knot extended above her left ear, and her nose stuck through one set of Anne d'Autriche. Beside her Billy stood, solemn as a stone, yet with a sort of relief glazed upon his face.

Mr. Diggs sat straight up at the vision of his spouse. "Flouncing

Florence!" was his exclamation. "Gee-whittaker, Mary, if you ain't the most unmitigated sight!" And wind then left him.

Mary's reply arrived in tones like a hornet stinging slowly and often. "Mr. Diggs, I have put up with many things, and am expecting to put up with many more. But you'd behave better if you consorted with gentlemen."

The door slammed and she was gone. Not a word to either of the boys, not even any notice of them. It was thorough, and silence consequently held them for a moment.

"He didn't mean anything," said Bertie, growing partially responsible.

"Didn't mean anything," repeated Billy, like a lesson.

"I'll take him and he'll apologize," Bertie pursued, walking over to Billy.

"He'll apologize," went Billy, like a cheerful piece of mechanism. Responsibility was still quite distant from him.

Mr. Diggs got his wind back. "Better not," he advised in something near a whisper. "Better not go after her. Her father was a fightin' preacher, and she's—well, begosh! she's a chip of the old pulpit." And he rolled his eye towards the door. Another door slammed somewhere above, and they gazed at each other, did Bertie and Mr. Diggs. Then Mr. Diggs, still gazing at Bertie, beckoned to him with a speaking eye and a crooked finger; and as he beckoned, Bertie approached like a conspirator and sat down close to him. "Begosh!" whispered Mr. Diggs. "Unmitigated." And at this he and Bertie laid their heads down on the table and rolled about in spasms.

Billy from his corner seemed to become aware of them. With his eye fixed upon them like a statue, he came across the room, and, sitting down near them with formal politeness, observed, "Was you ever to the battle of Antietam?" This sent them beyond the limit; and they rocked their heads on the table and wept as if they would expire.

Thus the three remained during what space of time is not known: the two upon the table, convalescent with relapses, and Billy like a seated idol, unrelaxed at his vigil. The party was seen through the windows by Silas, coming from the stable to inquire if the gelding should not be harnessed. Silas leaned his face to the pane, and envy spoke plainly in it. "Oh my, oh my!" he mentioned aloud to himself. So we have the whole household: Mrs. Diggs reposing scornfully in an upper chamber; all parts of the tavern darkened, save the one lighted room; the three inside that among their bottles, with the one outside looking covetously in at them; and the gelding stamping in the stable.

But Silas, since he could not share, was presently of opinion that this was enough for one sitting, and he tramped heavily upon the porch.

This brought Bertie back to the world of reality, and word was given to fetch the gelding. The host was in no mood to part with them, and spoke of comfortable beds and breakfast as early as they liked; but Bertie had become entirely responsible. Billy was helped in, Silas was liberally thanked, and they drove away beneath the stars, leaving behind them golden opinions and a host who decided not to disturb his help-mate by retiring to rest in their conjugal bed.

Bertie had forgotten, but the playful gelding had not. When they came abreast of that gate where Diggs of the Bird-in-Hand had met them at sunset Bertie was only aware that a number of things had happened at once, and that he had stopped the horse after about twenty yards of battle. Pride filled him, but emptied away in the same instant, for a voice on the road behind him spoke inquiringly through the darkness:

"Did anyone fall out?" said the voice. "Who fell out?"

"Billy!" shrieked Bertie, cold all over. "Billy, are you hurt?"

"Did Billy fall out?" said the voice with plaintive cadence. "Poor Billy!"

"He can't be," muttered Bertie. "Are you?" he loudly repeated.

There was no answer; but steps came along the road as Bertie checked and pacified the gelding. Then Billy appeared by the wheel. "Poor Billy fell out," he said mildly. He held something up, which Bertie took. It had been Billy's straw hat, now a brimless fabric of ruin. Except for smirches and one inexpressible tear which dawn revealed to Bertie a little later, there were no further injuries, and Billy got in and took his seat quite competently.

Bertie drove the gelding with a firm hand after this. They passed through the cool of the unseen meadow-swamps, and heard the sound of the hollow bridges as they crossed them, and now and then the gulp of some pouring brook. They went by the few lights of Mattapan, seeing from some points on their way the beacons of the harbor, and again the curving line of lamps that drew the outline of some village built upon a hill. Dawn showed them Jamaica Pond, smooth and breezeless, and encircled with green skeins of foliage, delicate and new. Here multitudinous birds were chirping their tiny, overwhelming chorus. When at length, across the flat suburban spaces, they again sighted Memorial tower, small in the distance, the sun was lighting it.

Confronted by this, thoughts of hitherto banished care, and of the morrow that was now to-day, and of Philosophy 4 coming in a very few hours, might naturally have arisen and darkened the end of their pleasant journey. Not so, however. Memorial tower suggested another line of argument. It was Billy who spoke, as his eyes first rested upon that eminent pinnacle of Academe.

"Well, John owes me five dollars."

"Ten, you mean."

"Ten? How?"

"Why, her hair. And it was easily worth twenty."

Billy turned his head and looked suspiciously at Bertie. "What did I do?" he asked.

"Do! Don't you know?"

Billy in all truth did not.

"Phew!" went Bertie. "Well, I don't either. Didn't see it. Saw the consequences, though. Don't you remember being ready to apologize? What do you remember, anyhow?"

Billy consulted his recollections with care: they seemed to break off at the champagne. That was early. Bertie was astonished. Did not Billy remember singing "Brace up and dress the Countess," and "A noble lord the Earl of Leicester"? He had sung them quite in his usual manner, conversing freely betweenwhiles. In fact, to see and hear him, no one would have suspected—— "It must have been that extra silver-fizz you took before dinner," said Bertie. "Yes," said Billy; "that's what it must have been." Bertie supplied the gap in his memory, a matter of several hours, it seemed. During most of this time Billy had met the demands of each moment quite like his usual agreeable self—a sleep-walking state. It was only when the hair incident was reached that his conduct had noticeably crossed the line. He listened to all this with interest intense.

"John does owe me ten, I think," said he.

"I say so," declared Bertie. "When do you begin to remember again?"

"After I got in again at the gate. Why did I get out?"

"You fell out, man."

Billy was incredulous.

"You did. You tore your clothes wide open."

Billy, looking at his trousers, did not see it.

"Rise, and I'll show you," said Bertie.

"Goodness gracious!" said Billy.

Thus discoursing, they reached Harvard Square. Not your Harvard Square, gentle reader, that place populous with careless youths and careful maidens and reticent persons with books, but one of sleeping windows and clear, cool air and few sounds; a Harvard Square of emptiness and conspicuous sparrows and milk wagons and early street-car conductors in long coats going to their breakfast; and over all this the sweetness of the arching elms.

As the gelding turned down towards Pike's the thin old church clock struck. "Always sounds," said Billy, "like cambric tea."

"Cambridge tea," said Bertie.

"Walk close behind me," said Billy as they came away from the livery stable. "Then they won't see the hole."

Bertie did so; but the hole was seen by the street-car conductors and the milkmen, and these sympathetic hearts smiled at the sight of the marching boys, and loved them without knowing any more of them than this. They reached their building and separated.

V.

ONE hour later they met. Shaving and a cold bath and summer flannels not only clean but beautiful invested them with the radiant innocence of flowers. It was still too early for their regular breakfast, and they sat down to eggs and coffee at the Holly Tree.

"I waked John up," said Billy. "He is satisfied."

"Let's have another order," said Bertie. "These eggs are delicious." Each of them accordingly ate four eggs and drank two cups of coffee.

"Oscar called five times," said Billy; and he threw down those cards which Oscar had so neatly written.

"There's multiplicity of the ego for you!" said Bertie.

Now, inspiration is a strange thing, and less obedient even than love to the will of man. It will decline to come when you prepare for it with the loftiest intentions, and lo! at an accidental word it will suddenly fill you, as at this moment it filled Billy.

"By gum!" said he, laying his fork down. "Multiplicity of the ego. Look here. I fall out of a buggy and ask——"

"By gum!" said Bertie, now also visited by inspiration.

"Don't you see?" said Billy.

"I see a whole lot more," said Bertie with excitement. "I had to tell you about your singing." And the two burst into a flare of talk.

To hear such words as cognition, attention, retention, entity, and identity, freely mingled with such other words as silver-fizz and false hair, brought John, the egg-and-coffee man, as near surprise as his impregnable nature permitted. Thus they finished their large breakfast, and hastened to their notes for a last good bout at memorizing Epicharmos of Kos and his various brethren. The appointed hour found them crossing the college yard towards a door inside which Philosophy 4 awaited them: three hours of written examination! But they looked more roseate and healthy than most of the anxious band whose steps were converging to that same gate of judgment. Oscar, meeting them on the way, gave them his deferential "Good-morning," and trusted that the gentlemen felt easy. Quite so, they told him, and bade him feel easy about his pay, for which they were, of course, responsible. Oscar wished them good luck and watched them go to their desks with his little eyes, smiling in his particular manner. Then he dismissed them from his mind, and sat with a faint remnant of his smile, fluently

writing his perfectly accurate answer to the first question upon the examination paper.

Here is that paper. You will not be able to answer all the questions, probably, but you may be glad to know what such things are like.

Philosophy 4.

1. Thales, Zeno, Parmenides, Heraclitus, Anaxagoras. State briefly the doctrine of each.

2. Phenomenon, noumenon. Discuss these terms. Name their modern descendants.

3. Thought=Being. Assuming this, state the difference, if any, between (1) memory and anticipation; (2) sleep and waking.

4. Democritus, Pythagoras, Bacon. State the relation between them. In what terms must the objective world ultimately be stated? Why?

5. Experience is the result of time and space being included in the nature of mind. Discuss this.

6. Nihil est in intellectu quod non prius fuerit in sensibus. Whose doctrine? Discuss it.

7. What is the inherent limitation in all ancient philosophy? Who first removed it?

8. Mind is expressed through what? Matter through what? Is speech the result or the cause of thought?

9. Discuss the nature of the ego.

10. According to Plato, Locke, Berkeley, where would the sweetness of a honey-comb reside? Where would its shape? its weight? Where do you think these properties reside?

Ten questions, and no Epicharmos of Kos. But no examination-paper asks everything, and this one did ask a good deal. Bertie and Billy wrote the full time allotted, and found that they could have filled an hour more without coming to the end of their thoughts. Comparing notes at lunch, their information was discovered to have been lacking here and there. Nevertheless, it was no failure; their inner convictions were sure of fifty per cent. at least, and this was all they asked of the gods. "I was ripping about the ego," said Bertie. "I was rather splendid myself," said Billy, "when I got going. And I gave him a huge steer about memory." After lunch both retired to their beds and fell into sweet oblivion until seven o'clock, when they rose and dined, and after playing a little poker went to bed again pretty early.

Some six mornings later, when the Professor returned their papers to them, their minds were washed almost as clear of Plato and Thales as were their bodies of yesterday's dust. The dates and doctrines, hastily memorized to rattle off upon the great occasion, lay only upon the surface of their minds, and after use they quickly evaporated. To their pleasure and most genuine astonishment, the Professor paid them high compliments. Bertie's discussion of the double personality had

been the most intelligent which had come in from any of the class. The illustration of the intoxicated hack-driver who had fallen from his hack and inquired who it was that had fallen, and then had pitied himself, was, said the Professor, as original and perfect an illustration of our subjective-objectivity as he had met with in all his researches. And Billy's suggestions concerning the inherency of time and space in the mind the Professor had also found very striking and independent, particularly his reasoning based upon the well-known distortions of time and space which hasheesh and other drugs produce in us. This was the sort of thing which the Professor had wanted from his students: free comment and discussions, the spirit of the course, rather than any strict adherence to the letter. He had constructed his questions to elicit as much individual discussion as possible and had been somewhat disappointed in his hopes.

Yes, Bertie and Billy were astonished. But their astonishment did not equal that of Oscar, who had answered many of the questions in the Professor's own language. Oscar received seventy-five per cent. for this achievement—a good mark. But Billy's mark was eighty-six and Bertie's ninety. "There is some mistake," said Oscar to them when they told him; and he hastened to the Professor with his tale. "There is no mistake," said the Professor. Oscar smiled with increased deference. "But," he urged, "I assure you, sir, those young men knew absolutely nothing. I was their tutor and they knew nothing at all. I taught them all their information myself." "In that case," replied the Professor, not pleased with Oscar's tale-bearing, "you must have given them more than you could spare. Good-morning."

Oscar never understood. But he graduated considerably higher than Bertie and Billy, who were not able to discover many other courses so favorable to "original rresearch" as was Philosophy 4. That is twenty years ago. To-day Bertie is treasurer of the New Amsterdam Trust Company, in Wall Street, Billy is superintendent of passenger traffic of the New York and Chicago Air Line. Oscar is successful too. He has acquired a lot of information. His smile is unchanged. He has published a careful work entitled "The Minor Poets of Cinquecento," and he writes book reviews for the *Evening Post*.



FOUND

BY FLORENCE RILEY RADCLIFFE

WHO seeketh most to him doth most accrue;
And yet I sought thee not, but only knew
That I had found, so faint, so strangely few
The barriers that existed 'twixt us two.

A GODDESS ON A PEDESTAL

By Maud Appleton Hartwell



EXTRACT from a letter written by Katherine Sloan to Sara Woodruff, dated October 3, 1897:

"The people who 'never could understand,' and prey on every honest friendship between a man and a woman, have said the usual things; but you should have taken it for granted that I would not allow my friendship with Mr. Upton to take on a sentimental color. I cannot find that my attitude has been, as you imply, unworthy of me or ungenerous to him.

"Your suggestion that he really cared came as an unpleasant shock. If you were right, my dear, romantic Sara, I should be in duty bound to allow him to go out of my life; my consolation is that as you are mistaken, I may retain a very charming and useful friend. Curiously enough, I, who in comparison with you know him so little, understand him so much better. His feeling towards me is one of friendliness, mingled with curiosity as to what I shall do and say next, and with chivalric pity for the sadness of my past life and the loneliness of my present one with Aunt Helen. Be sure that I shall not permit our relations to change. Though doubting Sara may not believe it, I have too high a standard of conduct for myself.

"Marrying him I have never considered for a moment seriously. What would marriage with him be like? Placid, contented, and conventional. In emergencies, I should always find him at my elbow, perfectly devoted and capable of fighting my battles successfully. But married life is not made up of emergencies,—it is chiefly long, quiet evenings alone together at home, when the thing of importance is, that you understand each other and can help each other to make those dull spots interesting. It gives me the creeps to think of those evenings with him. I can imagine you rising in your wrath at the implication that he is dull. I know as well as you that Mr. Upton is a man of brains and power—but not my sort of brains and power. Moreover, he does not understand me except just enough for us to be capital friends; the windings and turnings in my character serve only to amaze him, and of the unexplored corners of my nature he does not dream—he is

so simple. Finally, he does not appeal to my imagination, and that for a woman is the unforgivable offence.

"To speak of pleasanter things, I am to play the last of the month in New York. You can imagine that I am on the rack; for my success means so much. It means freedom from Aunt Helen, and, most of all, a justification of my own belief in myself. A complete failure would be less bitter than to be patronized by the critics and to have the society reporters make allusions to my 'Titian hair' and my social connections."

A letter from Robert Upton to Sara Woodruff:

"DEAR SARA: Katherine and I are writing you the same news in the same mail, as neither of us will yield to the other the privilege of telling you of our engagement. It is hopeless for me to try to tell you how happy and proud—and humble—I feel; but you will, as usual, know intuitively and sympathize.

"This morning I dropped in on your family while they were at breakfast, for I had reached the childish stage when I wanted to tell and to talk to someone that would care. They made me feel that they 'could rejoice with those that do rejoice,' and the only thing lacking to my happiness was you. I counted it a personal grievance that I did not find you there to congratulate me—and tease me. There is something very satisfactory in the way you have of being glad and sorry for people that I have missed horribly since you darted away so suddenly last September. My dependence on you as 'guide, philosopher, and friend' dates back to the days when you and Ben and Polly and I were boys together, and you know that it is hard to shake off early habits. I am glad that Kate never knew me when I was a boy, for if she had seen me through some of the scrapes that you and Polly have, she would never have fallen in love with me. My salvation as a lover lies in my past being largely mythical and my future unexplored. It is a great mystery to me, as it is, how I ever won her. I feel so unworthy of her and so hopeless of ever lifting my life to the level of hers; for she has a way of looking at things that makes me feel that I must stand on tiptoes to reach her. What frightens me even more is the responsibility of making her happy, as happy as I am doubly bound to do, as she is giving up her violin for me,—she must never regret it.

"In three weeks I am off to the Klondike with the exploring party. The Government has decided to send two officers and a few enlisted men. Ben is as dead set against my going as he was in the summer, but I still feel that it will be a great thing for me professionally; naturally, the charm of adventure in the trip does not appeal to me as much as it did yesterday. I easily gained permission to go, perhaps as Captain Stanley, the leader of the expedition, was a classmate of mine at West Point.

A Goddess on a Pedestal

"Please attribute any incoherencies to my chaotic frame of mind and excuse them. Will you write me a word of congratulation to 'The Imperial' at San Francisco to warm me up before my trip north?"

"Faithfully yours,

"ROBERT V. U.

"BALTIMORE, April 20, 1898."

A letter from Katherine Sloan to Sara Woodruff:

"DEAR SARA: I am writing to tell you only one thing, my engagement to Robert Upton. Are you glad?"

"I waked this morning with a rush of happiness such as I used to feel as a child when some grand event of childhood was to take place. After the whirl, the flurry, and the anxiety of the last six months,—to say nothing of the hardships of my whole life,—the perfect peace of knowing that my life is to be taken out of my hands is very welcome. Everything seems easy and simple this morning. It is strange, is it not, that I, who have always longed for the dear Bohemian life that mother and I led so long in Europe, should be rejoicing at the limitations that Robert's love will place on my life? I am even glad to give up my violin for his sake, my ambition for a musical career that I have cherished all these years.

"The seriousness of my engagement appals me. How can girls treat such an experience so lightly? I have felt all day as if I should like to do what I so often did when a child, creep into one of those dimly lighted Italian cathedrals and pray; I did it then half in play.

"Are you going to write me that you are glad of my happiness and that you think that Robert is a very fortunate man to win me?"

"Affectionately yours,

"KATHERINE.

"BALTIMORE, April 20, 1898."

Extract from a letter written by Ben Woodruff to his sister, dated May 8, 1898:

"I am not reconciled, though I would not breathe it to anyone but you. My chief grievance is that I do not believe that Miss Sloan really cares for Bob. Being only a stupid man, as you so often remind me, I can't tell why I think it,—it is a feel. Another grievance is that I never liked over much 'Our Lady of the Snows,'—for the same reason that the feller did not like Dr. Fell. I have often suspected that you did not like her so well since she came back to Baltimore the last time; but you always had a peculiarly unfeminine reticence on the subject. I shrewdly guess that my feeling about the engagement is much like that unrighteous antagonism that a man's family sometimes has towards the woman that he honors, etc. Bob really seems like one of the family.

"I am afraid that I was not successful, even with my noblest efforts, in concealing my feelings from Bob. Until the very last, before he went away, he was a bit cool, as if he were hurt about something. Then I managed to pull myself together, and for a few days it was quite like the Golden Age, when he showed no symptom of being in love. I have not the slightest intention of letting a woman come between Bob and me; so I am going to devote myself to behaving pretty to Miss Kate. My beginning of this policy was not marked by distinguished success. I attempted to make the conventional remarks about Bob's being a lucky man or some such insincere idiocy. She looked through my eyes to the back of my head and said with her Mona Lisa smile, 'You would give half of your income for a year to know that I was safe on a desert island in the Southern Pacific.' I am afraid that I am not intended by nature for a diplomat."

Extract from a letter written by Mrs. Thomas Agnew to Miss Woodruff, dated June 20, 1898:

"Kate's engagement has made a two months' topic of discussion. It was not a surprise to those of us that know and love her, as we felt sure that she would never have allowed their friendship to go so far had she not been willing for it to go to the end. I was sure of the present outcome as long ago as last fall, when you went to England.

"Kate says so much talk of anything so personal as her engagement takes the bloom off her happiness. Isn't that just like her? She has so much delicacy of thought and feeling that she often makes me feel positively vulgar. Her manner with him is perfect. I always thought that Tom and I were marvels of propriety and discretion at that critical period,—but Kate! We must have been very silly and frivolous. Her giving up her career for him is creating a good deal of comment, some of it ungenerous. I think it lovely of her to do it so gracefully; some girls would continually keep before a man the sacrifice that they were making.

"They had a good many dinners given in their honor and as a sort of farewell affairs to Mr. Upton. She takes his going beautifully. She said at the time that she was not going to make his setting out gloomy, and now she is wonderfully happy—considering many things that you cannot understand, as you have never been in love. By the way, dear, the Mortons had some very interesting things to say about your doings when they saw you in Florence. Don't commit the heinous offence of bringing home a title; we could never forgive you that.

"Do you suppose that Mr. Upton realizes what a rare, lovely girl he is winning? Tom told him that he admired his courage in attempting to domesticate a goddess on a pedestal. Tom does say such queer things sometimes."

Extract from a letter written by Polly Upton to Sara, dated July 8, 1898:

"... and the provoking part of it is that I want to know very much what you and Ben think about the engagement. Ben has developed an amazing amount of discretion—for Ben. In fact, when it comes to talking about the engagement, it is the discretion that damns. You too will be dumb, for you are too loyal to your dead friendship for her and your living one for him to say a word. I love you all the better for your loyalty—but my admiration for you does not satisfy my curiosity.

"I have taken the greatest pains to be 'mild and lovely' about the affair. I even sent Kate the Vedder 'Omar' and a huge bunch of violets, for I am too fond of Cousin Robert to be a cat.

"Considering that he is my cousin and that I am preëmpted, I suppose it is in order for me to say that I think him one of the dearest boys in the country,—that's why it makes me gnash my teeth to think of his marrying Kate. She is plenty good enough for other men, but not for him. It is perfectly true that she has been leading him on ever since she met him and dangling him like a fish on a hook—dangling him, to be sure, in her serene and mighty fashion. Now that she has found that she is not a genius, she is going to marry him, and win all the joys that his money and position will give her; incidentally she will escape her bondage to her aunt. With all her spirituality of appearance, my lady loves 'the world, the flesh, and the Devil' as well as the rest of us. Men in general cannot see it, and they let her stay on the pedestal where she puts herself.

"Kate says that she is going to give up her career at the start as a sacrifice to her love for Robert. That is all nonsense. She has not made a great success, which is the only sort that would satisfy her. The failure to make a great hit was not due to improper advertising, bad management, her nervousness, or half-a-dozen other things that she said would be different in her second season. Of course, she made a very pleasant impression everywhere that she played. When I was in Boston, I heard Clarkson, the great critic, say of her playing, 'Very pretty, but of course she has not now, and I doubt if she ever does have, breadth of style and genuine imagination. She suffers from confusing sentiment and sentimentality.'

"I grow thoroughly enraged over the way that she 'puts on' her engagement,—sort of an Irving production with every detail complete, scenic effects and the like. Let us hope that dear Robert never sees that it is art. You would laugh over Harrie Agnew; she gets perfectly tearful over the way in which Kate takes the engagement. For my part, I should like to box the minx's ears."

Extract from a letter written by Ben to Sara, dated October 3, 1898:

"I inclose to you some newspaper articles about Robert's death. Those in the *Item* are based on the facts about the death of the party as they were reported to the War Department.

"I have kept for you to read all the notes of condolence and of inquiry about his death that were sent to me. Miss Sloan has not quite as many as I. Her grief is intense enough to prove even to me that she loved him. I confess I felt like a scoundrel when I went to see her the other day about the provision that Bob made for her in his will, for it seemed sacrilegious to speak about money to a woman with a grief like that.

"But I know, dear little sister, that she is not the one to whom his death is the greatest blow. It did not need that heart-broken note of yours to tell me how you felt—I had always known. I love you too much, dear child, for you to keep anything like that from me. Did you think that I did not know why you ran off to Europe last year? It puts me in a rage against the world in general to think of you among strangers with your grief to bear alone, and not even the privilege to mourn him. I have had half-a-dozen minds about coming over to join you. Would it make it harder or easier for you to have me with you? Please let me know at once."

Extract from a letter written by Mrs. Thomas Agnew to Sara Woodruff, dated October 12, 1898:

"I can't say anything conventional about his death, for I know that you must feel it almost as much as a brother's, considering that he lived in your family so much. There is nothing to be said by anyone when a blow like this comes to us. It is all that I can do to go to see Kate, for her grief is of that hopeless, quiet sort that makes your heart ache; and it brings back to me so vividly the dreadful time when little Tom died. Dr. Bennett was at first afraid that she would have melancholia, but she seems stronger now and less morbid. She is looking thinner and, in her heavy mourning, paler and more fragile than ever—but more beautiful, if possible. You remember she looks her best in black.

"She is seeing no one but her friends and a few of his most intimate ones, and until lately has hardly been out of the house. Strangely enough, she does not hesitate now to show how much she loved him. I have written you that she never even mentioned her love for him? How shallow the chatterers were who said that she did not care! Her reticence was beyond their dull comprehension. It used to make me furious to hear people suggest that she was marrying Mr. Upton for his money."

Extract from a letter written by Polly Upton to Sara, dated November 5, 1898:

"It is just three months since Robert was last seen, and I cannot yet believe with my heart that he is dead, though I know it with my mind.

"I have tried to forget my own grief in cheering up Ben. A man's sorrow is a terrible thing; it is not so tangible as a woman's and you feel so helpless in meeting it. The queer, brusque way that Ben has of referring to the matter hurts me more than all of Kate's agony. Ben is the one to whom Robert's death is the greatest blow. I even believe, dear, that your friendship for Robert was a finer thing and more helpful to him than Kate's love, and I do not doubt that you are now grieving for him more than she and almost as much as I. What good times we used to have, we four children! No other friendships will ever mean so much to us.

"It seems cruel and unwomanly to speak of Kate as I feel,—I am no more convinced than ever of her real love for Robert. I feel, however, that she is greatly to be pitied for her self-deception. I believe that she is perfectly sincere in thinking that, now that it is all over, she really cares. It seems to me that what makes her imaginary grief greater is the thought that she was never quite candid with him and herself in their engagement. I try—oh, so hard—to pity her, as I know that she deserves to be pitied, and all the time I feel the ugly thought creeping towards me that she is, after all, enjoying the new emotional experience and the opportunity of acting a new rôle. I have a wretched disposition, doubtless, and I hate myself for feeling as I do."

From Katherine Sloan to Sara Woodruff:

"DEAR SARA: I cannot thank you enough for your lovely, comprehending note about Robert's death. Everyone has been so kind and sympathetic, yet my misery only grows greater as the days go by—oh, such long, dreary, hopeless days!

"I feel that I did not love him half enough when I had him with me, nor appreciate half enough his fine, strong personality. It seems as if I had had my share of unhappiness before this overwhelming sorrow came to me, which makes all the rest except mother's death seem trivial. I suppose that I must be brave, as he would have me be, and take up my life again, with the hope that I may make it of some use to others if not to myself. But just now, for a little time, I must live with my memories of those short days of our engagement when we were together.

"How little the people understand me who think that I shall now take up my music! If I was willing to make the sacrifice of it for

Robert when he was alive, his wish that I should not have a public career is now doubly sacred to me.

"Affectionately yours,

" KATHERINE.

" BALTIMORE, November 18, 1898."

A cablegram to Sara Woodruff, dated February 20, 1899:

" Klondike party, including Upton, arrived safely at Weare mouth of Tanana River.

" WOODRUFF."

From Katherine Sloan to Sara Woodruff:

" MY DEAR SARA: The habit of suffering has become so fixed upon me that after a month of happiness, of something to live for, I have not come to a full realization that I am once more a happy woman. The shadow has darkened my life so long that I cannot in a moment forget that it is gone and shake off its chill. Indeed, I shall not feel that my mourning is really over until I have him back again. Just think, I have at least two months to wait! Everyone seems surprised that I do not at once take off my black and begin to go out again. Your sympathetic insight tells you why? A woman that has been through what I have since Robert's departure is not to be tempted by a dinner at the Burtons to meet the French minister.

" These weeks before Robert's return will seem almost as long and weary as the hopeless ones since he went away. When I have him back, I do not think that I shall regret, as far as I am concerned, my ordeal; for his adventure has lifted our love out of the commonplace, and the tragic touch has given it a sort of consecration that, I pray God, it may never lose. I am willing, now that it is all over, to confess that until his disappearance came to make my blind eyes see clearly how dear he was to me my engagement had not been satisfying. I had tried to stifle my discontent by the thought that I was too much of an idealist to find any of the higher relations with another anything but disappointing. I forced myself to believe that I was letting ideals, meant in the first place only for heaven, stand in the way of real solid happiness; but all the time I was groping vaguely for something that I did not have. Now it is different. But I am so numb from pain that I cannot as yet feel my joy at Robert's safety as keenly as I did my grief at his loss. I suppose that I am one of those people who are always more sensitive to the tragedies of life than to the happiness.

" Is it true that you are coming home in June?

" Affectionately yours,

" KATHERINE.

" BALTIMORE, March 27, 1899."

From Ben Woodruff to his sister:

"CHICAGO, June 2, 1899.

"DEAR LITTLE SISTER: I was encouraged at first sight of Robert, but I soon saw my mistake. He is as nervous as a witch, very much run down, and in low spirits most of the time. There is something pathetic in a man of his splendid strength and energy so gone to pieces. You can guess that he is not like himself when I tell you that he is often as cross and fractious as at that time when he was visiting us in our salad days and we all three had the measles. There seems to be something the matter with him that I cannot fathom—you know the hopelessness of getting anything out of Bob unless he is so minded. He made a desperate effort to seem like himself when I first met him in Portland, but he has at last given a silent acquiescence to my unspoken protest and let me constitute myself nurse, private secretary, and jester in ordinary.

"He is to stay with the Uptons for a while, and then he hopes to go with Miss Sloan to the Adirondacks. It's a pity that she is to see him at present. Her love for him has taken on somewhat of a heroic cast, and Bob does not look a bit like a hero just now, or act like one. Because he is not sick enough to be put to bed with a doctor and a trained nurse in attendance, she will not make allowances for him. He needs to be amused and to have no demands made upon him. Above all, he needs to be discreetly petted as you clever women know how to pet a man; you can do it so skilfully that even a real man like Bob won't know anything about it except that it is awfully jolly, and consequently can't resent it.

"As ever,

"BEN."

Extract from a letter written by Polly Upton to Sara Woodruff, dated June 19, 1899:

"I am sadly disappointed that you will not visit me for a few days before going to Sawyerville to join your family. Robert too is melancholy over your defection, but he has the advantage of me in that he is going down to Sawyerville to visit the Clays before he joins Kate in the mountains.

"Ben has sent you official bulletins about Robert's health; mine is unofficial. He is better, but Dr. Bennett is annoyed that he does not regain strength faster. He asked me yesterday if Robert had anything on his mind—of course, I lied promptly and loyally. The truth is, Cousin Robert is not happy in his engagement. Ben has suspected something of the sort and has tried to sound me in that obvious, clumsy fashion of his that speaks so well for his bed-rock of honesty,—the dear boy.

"It seems this way to me. Robert is completely wrapped up in his love for Kate, but not so radiantly happy as he was before he went Klondiking. And the reason for the change? He is terribly hurt at Kate's reception of him. Of course, he had heard of how she bore herself during his absence, and expected that their relations would be different from what they are. For the first few days, when he was sick in bed, she was here a good deal and was adorable. Even my stiff neck was bowed before her, and I became a believer. But when he was able to be up and about the change came. The climax was brought about, I think, when he fell asleep one day while she was reading to him the Brownings' love-letters—the poor boy was perfectly exhausted. It is safer to minister to the stomach of a sick man, as I have been doing with Robert, than to attempt to elevate his immortal soul.

"The trouble with Kate is that her emotions have been keyed up about him, and with him idealized to more than human proportions she finds him at his worst. Her love has not a scrap of the maternal in it, or she would feel very tender to him in his weakness; but she treats him with a cool indifference that must madden him. He knows that he is disappointing her, and very humbly takes all the blame. I actually think that he is going to Sawyerville to pull himself together enough to play the stage lover to Kate in the Adirondacks."

Extract from a letter written by Ben Woodruff to his sister, dated July 7, 1899:

"Bob and I are going cruising for a week, and then for a few days' fishing in Delaware with Jim Burton. This trip means that he has given up going to Sawyerville. When he was leaving the house night before last, he said that he had decided not to go to Sawyerville. I could not get any excuse out of him for the change of plan, but probably it had something to do with his proposing this new trip to-day.

"We are having an eminently satisfactory bachelor time without Miss Sloan. No matter how much a man loves a woman, he must occasionally enjoy a vacation from the arduous duties of courtship—at least I know I should. My nerves would never stand the strain of living up to a fiancée's ideal of me. Bob has picked up wonderfully now that he is off duty. He still has spells of being in the dumps, but neither Polly nor I can find what ails him. He declares that he is merely run down, and he can't forget those weeks when he was face to face with death and himself. My private opinion is, that he is broken up over Miss Sloan's coolness and her whims.

"You can never read now those notes of condolence that were sent me about Bob. Night before last, when he was over, I gave them to him to read, thinking that they might amuse him—precious few of us get

the chance of knowing all the kindly things that people think about us. Strange to say, he tossed them all into the fire without reading them, except one that he put in his pocket, after reading it about a dozen times. He said that this one would give him a good standard to live up to when he felt lazy. Pity that Miss Sloan can't say some of those nice things to him now that she has him here in the flesh."

Extract from a letter written by Polly Upton to Sara, dated August 5, 1899:

"Robert has just written from Canada that his engagement is broken. He states the fact baldly without a word of explanation, and begs me not to let the news go beyond you and Ben and the family. Evidently he must have left the Agnews as soon as the engagement was off, for he was to remain with them until the middle of the month.

"My hope is that the break is only a temporary one, a lovers' quarrel that will result in a more perfect understanding between them,—I do not dare to think of what it would mean to him to lose her completely, for he worships her. I can understand perfectly how the little differences have accumulated until they both believe that their love has been a delusion. As I have said to you before, they have been looking at each other with a cold north light of criticism, with the inevitable result. There was bound to be an upheaval sooner or later, and perhaps it was better that it should come before their marriage. One of two things had to happen: Kate had to adjust herself to actual conditions, think less of herself and more of Robert's feelings; or he had to succeed in playing the lover's rôle as she conceived him in it during her hysterical state when he was away.

"Poor, dear fellow! It seems as if he had had enough suffering without this final blow. I hate her cordially, and I do not think them adapted to each other, but for Robert's sake I am praying for a reconciliation."

Extract from a letter written to Sara Woodruff by Harriet Agnew, dated August 6, 1899:

"I am completely upset by the most distressing thing that has just happened. Kate has broken her engagement, and Mr. Upton left immediately for Canada. None of the rest of my guests know it as yet, though they must suspect something from his hurried departure.

"It seems as if something ought to be done by their friends who have influence with them to persuade them to reconsider the step, for they are so well adapted to each other. Everyone has commented upon Mr. Upton's complete devotion to her,—he seemed to anticipate her every wish,—and I have written you how ideal her manner with him

was. Tom has got the notion into his head that there was something artificial about their attitude towards each other,—he says that Mr. Upton was 'too industrious' in his attentions.

"The rupture can be only temporary, and I fear that it has been brought about by Kate's peculiar temperament. She is, as you know, a little more sensitive than the rest of us to the subtleties in her relations with others and a little more strenuous in living out her ideals.

"Of course, those of us like you and me are sure how much she cares for him—no girl that was so broken-hearted at a man's death could so soon cease to care. Now she must be suffering as only such high-strung women can suffer over some mole-hill that she has made into a mountain. Won't you use your influence when the time comes?

"The bolt came out of a clear sky. She called me into her room when she was dressing for dinner and said, 'Mr. Upton and I have broken our engagement, Harriet.' I asked no questions, for you know that people are not in the habit of asking her unpleasant questions. Finally she said, 'Mr. Upton is absolutely blameless in every way; but I feel that in marrying him I should be violating my higher nature. We should be stumbling-blocks in each other's way all the days of our lives. I have found out that I do not love him as I should, that I never have loved him in the right way.' She saw him once more after that, but she has not mentioned the matter to me again.

"I was never so sorry for a man in my life before as for him. The way that he concealed his feelings that last night at dinner was marvellous, and I fancy that some of the guests will wonder at it when the truth leaks out."

Extract from a letter written by Ben Woodruff to his sister, dated August 29, 1899:

"Bob has just got back from Canada. I confess that I can't make anything out of him these days, now that he is having as many moods as a woman. His conduct is inexplicable. I expected to have him reappear a disconsolate lover with suicidal tendencies, and here he is just the same as ever with not a word to say about the matter. Isn't it just like the jolly old boy to keep so dark about the whole business? I expect that he is cut too deep to gossip about it even with me.

"The situation is especially unfortunate for Miss Sloan after what Polly calls 'her very artistic period of mourning.' Polly and I should be in a seventh heaven of delight, if only we didn't see that Robert is not in good spirits. I am very curious to know why the deal is off, but I fancy that it is just about as Polly says, that no one will ever know, as Miss Sloan will never get her emotions sufficiently analyzed to know the reason herself.

"On the eighth of the month you may expect me for a week, and Robert may come with me. He is to give me an answer in a few days."

From a letter written by Katherine Sloan to Sara Woodruff, dated September 2, 1899:

"My tragedy lies in not being sensitive to the actual, and in always passing by the real in search of the ideal. If only I had the security of judgment about myself that you have, I should not now be making such a failure of my life. It is all over my engagement to Mr. Upton.

"No one but you shall know the real reason of our engagement being broken,—I must tell you, for I am not one of those stolid people that can bear grief alone. Sometime I am going to ask you what you meant by telling me that I ought not to write to you so unreservedly. I can't go over all the ground of my quarrel with Robert, as I am too wretched about the affair. In brief, I did not find the actual Robert like the one that I loved while he was in the Klondike. There were a great many little misunderstandings,—all my fault, I now see,—and finally one day I gave him his freedom, as I was sure that I did not any longer love him. He protested, and acted as no other man but Robert would have acted. When I thought of the interview afterwards, it occurred to me that he had never once, despite his protests, said that he loved me; so when I saw him again I said in a petulant mood that I did not believe that he any longer loved me. Oh Sara, he could not deny it! His silence so angered me that I cried, 'You love some other woman!' He would say neither yes nor no to that; but he did not need to answer me.

"Now that my anger has died out and I am far enough from the sad affair, I know my mistake. Indeed, I do not see how I could have ever been so blind to the fact that he is all the world to me. I must win him back. It can't be that his love for her—the other woman—is anything more than a temporary delusion, caused by my neglect and folly. I have never in my life been so unhappy, not even when I thought Robert lying dead in Alaska and our love buried with him in the snow."

Extract from a letter written by Robert Upton to Sara Woodruff, dated September 2, 1899:

"... because when a man has made such a consummate idiot of himself as I have and has made a mess of things not only for himself but, worse still, for other people, he has no right to expect such kindness as I found in your note. When I took the risk of writing you, I knew that you would be perfectly justified in laughing at me; but I hoped against hope that you would understand that my love for you had been the permanent reality in my life,—so much a part of myself that I never realized it until those awful days in the Klondike when I was face to

face with facts. Because you have understood and been generous, my humiliation is even greater than before, for the thought that it is my own blind folly that has made my love for you seem ridiculous is very bitter. It seems as if my engagement to Miss Sloan must shadow our life together, yours and mine. Strange, isn't it, that 'yours and mine'?

"If I may come to Sawyerville with Ben on the eighth, I will be very discreet. It is quite right for your sake, and even more for hers, that you should keep me out of my new inheritance as long as you wish. We must not tell Ben, for you know that he can never keep anything,—he couldn't even keep that adorable note of yours that I found in his collection of condolences. I was horribly afraid until your letter came that you, like everybody else, had been having delusions, that you would wish to take back all those nice things that you wrote about me. Of course, few of them are true, but a man likes a woman to have a few notions about him, if only he is clever enough to prevent her from ever seeing him as he is. I pray the gods for the cleverness to keep you under the delusion."



RAINDROPS

BY AGNES LEE

SHE thought the rain would surely bring
The dear one to her door;
Earth's every little upward thing
A cap of raindrops wore.

She knew he loved their peaceful sound,
And blessed the gleaming gems,
Or laughed to think his forehead crowned
With such cool diadems.

Upon the path she heard them beat,
And whispered low his name;
Sometimes she took them for his feet,
His feet that never came

She heard them falling in the rills,
And wept for what might be,
Nor caught the music on the hills
Of higher destiny.

BROTHER PIDGLEY SAVES THE DAY

By Cyrus Townsend Brady

Author of "When Blades are Out and Love's Afield," "For the Freedom of the Sea," "Under Tops'ls and Tents," etc.



"THE prospects for establishing the services of our Church at Cawker City are not very bright, I think," I said to the Bishop, who had sent me up there to look over the field. There had been a meeting of the Standing Committee that night, and we were all seated around the big table in the Bishop's study chatting a little before going to bed.

"Why not?" asked the old man.

"Well, Bishop, you see there are only six hundred people in the town, and there are seven churches already in the field. Naturally, all of them are having a desperate struggle for existence. I only found two Episcopalians there, and they had more or less strayed from the fold. It's too far away from any other place to combine for Sunday services too."

"What about a week-night service?" asked the Bishop.

"I thought of that and made some inquiry, but most of the churches have a week-night prayer-meeting, and the other nights are taken up with lodge meetings. I never saw a town that had so many lodges or organizations of some kind or other, and every one of them is in duplicate. For instance, the Order of the Western Moon will meet on Monday night, and on the same evening the sisters, or daughters, or mothers, or some other feminine auxiliary to it, will meet at another place at the same time. I mentioned every day in the week, and I declare that every one of them is the night for the meeting of two or three different sets of orders. As one of the men explained it to me, they quarrel all day Sunday between the different churches and make it up in harmonious lodge meetings during the week, for everybody belongs to everything—they only differ in religion."

"It is rather hopeless, isn't it?" said the Bishop; "and what a pity it is too! I know all about those little towns. When I was a young man just ordained I had a parish in a certain little town."

He settled himself back in his chair, stretched out his feet before

him, and lighted his infrequent cigar. We knew the story-telling mood was upon him, and we would not have interrupted him for the world.

"Well, naturally, being fresh from the seminary, I was filled with that consciousness of power which very young ministers exhibit until they wreck a parish or two and get on the ecclesiastical bargain counter, and I resolved that I would promote the cause of church unity in the place to which I had been sent with all my heart and soul. Like many another beginner, I rather was of the belief that the Divine plan of salvation was in accord with my own particular interpretation of creed and Scripture, and though I trust I was charitable,—horrid word to use for that spirit of comity which should exist between differing Christians,—I felt in my heart a sincere conviction that the only way to promote this church unity and bring it about, as it were, was to convert every one to my own way of thinking—a common mistake that, gentlemen.

"I thought it would be easy enough to convert the lay people of the town, but realized, of course, that the ministers would be a harder task. I remember one of the first sermons I preached with that idea before me. It was a hot summer day, and a gentleman very much under the influence of liquor slid into the rear part of the church and went to sleep. It was somewhat disquieting at first, but I soon warmed up to the subject and forgot him. What happened has always been a warning to me against very loud preaching—I waked him up. My vehemence so disturbed him that he arose, walked unsteadily up the aisle, and stopped in front of the pulpit. I was dreadfully embarrassed, I remember, but I retained sufficient presence of mind to take what I thought was an efficient and brilliant means of bridging over the gap, for, of course, I had stopped preaching when he stood still and looked at me. Leaning over the pulpit I remarked suavely:

"‘I perceive that my good brother is ill. Will some——’"

"Before anyone could move, however, he lifted his head and, fixing his blinking eyes upon me, remarked in perfectly distinct tones heard throughout the church,—

"‘I sh’d think such preachin’ ’ud make everybody ill!’"

"Well, that was a set-back," continued the Bishop, joining in our laughter, "but I got along very nicely. From the smallest we became the largest congregation, and I began to look forward with feverish interest to the visit of the Bishop for confirmation. At the same time it occurred to me that it would be a wise move on my part—in pursuance of my cherished dream—to assemble the ministers, that we might meet together in a friendly way and talk over things; so, though I was the youngest and the newest member of the ecclesiastical body, I boldly plunged in.

"I visited all my brother clergy and got them to promise to come

to my study on Monday morning and talk over matters. They were a very nice lot indeed, and they came and came again. Presently the Monday meetings became a fixture and we got to know each other very well, and our interest in each other's work deepened. By and by the Bishop set a date for his visitation and I began the preparation of a confirmation class, in the course of which I delivered a series of lectures on Sunday evenings on the Church, her ministry, etc., in which I laid great stress on the apostolic succession, the orders of the ministry, and so on.

"As the preparation of the confirmation class—which included a number of people who had hitherto been regarded as affiliated with other churches, though I solemnly affirm, gentlemen, that I made not the slightest effort to proselytize, notwithstanding my feelings about getting hold of everybody—continued, the reports of my lectures and the position I assumed began to be bruited about, and a slight coolness was evidenced in the so-called clericus, or Monday meetings, not very tangible but still perceptible. However, there was no open rupture or break until the last lecture and the Bishop's visitation, which occurred in the same week. Then the affair came to a head.

The innocent factor in the settlement of the question was the Baptist minister. The Baptist church had been closed for some time during a temporary interregnum, and the present incumbent had only reached the city the week before the meeting of the clericus to which I refer. Though I was very busy with the approaching confirmation and other things, I called upon him at once to extend to him an invitation to come to the meeting at my house on the following Monday. Brother Pidgley, a pleasant man, greeted me very kindly and appeared glad to see me, but demurred at attending the clericus.

"'For,' he said, 'I am a new man in the community, the youngest in point of service, therefore, of the whole ministerial body. None of the other brethren have called upon me, and I think perhaps it would be well for me to wait a little longer until I have made their acquaintance.'

"All this was reasonable and proper, of course, but my good angel must have been at my elbow, for I urged him not to insist upon that point but to waive ceremony and come. I pointed out to him that the ministers of the little town were all very busy men—some of them, unfortunately, had to combine secular with religious work in order to procure daily bread; that they were very sociable and pleasant and would undoubtedly call upon him in due course. I said that I, myself, was especially occupied at this juncture, and perhaps I would not have called so soon had I not been the host of the weekly meetings. In short, I prevailed upon Brother Pidgley to come.

"Friday night was the last lecture. I came out strong. Sunday night was the Bishop's visitation, and the confirmation class came out

strong too. I think we had forty-two, a perfectly unheard-of number not only for the town but for the diocese as well, and quite half of them were from other churches!

"Monday morning came the clericus. We assembled in my study, and after our Congregationalist brother had led in prayer, we settled ourselves down for the usual discussions and exercises. The Methodist minister, a venerable man whom we all loved, was to read a paper that morning. While he was fumbling for his glasses the Presbyterian brother, whose church had been hit rather hard by the confirmation class, arose and stated that he had a communication which he desired to read before we entered upon the regular work of the day, and as I was by common consent the chairman of the assemblage I could make no objections, but at once expressed our willingness to hear him read his paper and offer his resolution.

"As he rose I detected a slight frown upon his forehead and a rather intense gleam in his eye that apprised me that his own apostolic succession was up, and that there was going to be a storm. While he was standing on his feet Brother Pidgley, who had been modestly late, slipped in and sat down next to me.

"'Brethren,' said the Presbyterian, 'I have a little paper here which I should like to read to you, which I think would greatly promote the cause of church unity in this vicinity, facilitate our deliberations, and enhance the value of our efforts for the religious betterment of the community. We have met here pleasantly and informally, as the guests of our dear young brother'—I knew there was something up when he called me his dear young brother in that tone, but I held my peace and listened intently with the rest to see whither this matter was tending.

"'We have met here, I say, pleasantly and informally, without any definite association or articles of any kind to bind us together, and I, for one, think in view of certain circumstances'—oh, those lectures and that confirmation class, gentlemen!—'that it would be better to see where we stand. Therefore I propose as a first requisite for our further deliberations the following:

"'WHEREAS, The undersigned ministers of the vicinity, in order to promote that fraternal feeling which should subsist between all God's people and especially those that He hath set apart as leaders in His Church, do hereby express our belief in the equal ecclesiastical and ministerial authority of each other in the Church of God.'"

"Bless me!" exclaimed the president of the Standing Committee, "that was a posing document, Bishop! How did you get over it?"

"I didn't get over it at all," answered the Bishop, laughing. "As you say, it was a poser! It put me between two horns of a dilemma at once. If I should refuse to acknowledge the coequal ecclesiastical and ministerial authority of all who were present, a great blow would be in-

flicted upon my growing popularity, I should lose many members of my congregation, and place myself before the community in the light of an offensive partisan. All of those dreams of church unity which required everybody to come into the Episcopal Church would be rudely shattered thereby. On the other hand, if I did sign the document I would be stultifying the theory of orders held by me and my Church, and I would be flatly contradicting everything that I had said in my lectures, which had caused all the trouble. It seemed to me that I could do neither the one thing nor the other. All this, of course, passed through my mind as he was reading and in the dead silence which followed the closing of his resolution. He was a smart man in his way, and having exploded his bomb-shell with great effect, he sat down.

"They all looked at me, and I felt it incumbent upon me to speak. Indeed, it was sound policy for me to say what I had to say before any of the others committed themselves to the Presbyterian proposition. In utter despair I rose to my feet, when my eye fell upon the excited face of Brother Pidgley. Joy filled my heart! He had saved me! I have loved Baptists ever since that day."

The Bishop paused and looked ruminatingly into the fire before him.

"How did he save you, Bishop?" I asked.

"What did you say?" continued the treasurer of the diocese.

"I pointed out to the assembled brethren," resumed the old man gravely, but with a twinkle of merriment in his eye, "that we had met together heretofore as brethren and friends without question of equality or inequality; that we had found much we all held in common, and our effort had been to emphasize the unities of our faith rather than our differences. Of course, we were radically at variance on many points, but as we had kept them in abeyance heretofore I trusted that we might continue to do so, and I hoped that my good brother would withdraw his proposition.

"He shook his head slowly at me," continued the Bishop, "and half rose to speak, but I went on without giving him time to interrupt. 'In fact, brethren,' I said, 'these resolutions are particularly unfortunate at this time, for we have with us to-day a new member of our clerical family, Brother Pidgley, who comes to take the vacant pastorate of the Baptist church. Knowing the spirit of harmony and comity which has been exhibited among us, I took upon myself to go to him and extend to him an invitation to meet here with us. I told him, of course, that nothing would be required of him that would do violence to his ecclesiastical beliefs or convictions; and now, brethren, the first time he comes here we meet him with this document! Gentlemen, I appeal to you! Brother Pidgley is a Baptist. He believes in but one form of baptism. According to his teaching, those of us who have not been immersed have not been validly baptized. I am one of that num-

ber, my Presbyterian brother is another; in short, I venture to say that none of us, in Brother Pidgley's eyes, has been properly baptized. How, then, in the name of all that is just, can we expect Brother Pidgley to put his name to this document recognizing the equal ecclesiastical authority of those who, in his judgment, have not even received valid baptism? Gentlemen, though I am sure the resolution has been thoughtlessly laid before the meeting, if it be pressed, Brother Pidgley will be prohibited from meeting with us in this pleasant way. In the interests of harmony and unity, therefore, I again express the hope that it will be withdrawn.'

" 'May I say a word, gentlemen?' said the Baptist minister, rising to his feet, with his face full of emotion. 'What my young brother has said, and said so well, expresses my views exactly, and I thank him for saying it for me. I came here not to discuss questions of church polity or to commit myself to the recognition of any existing forms of church government, or to the dogmas or tenets held by any especial body of Christians, but simply as a man who loves to meet other men, who, however mistaken their ideas are,—as he sees them,—yet are one with him in their aims and aspirations. If the paper be pressed, I shall, of course, have no option left but to withdraw.'

" 'Do not go, Brother Pidgley!' said the Methodist minister, rising to his feet; 'we quite understand your position. Believing as you do, there would be no other course left for you if the paper were pressed. Gentlemen, and brethren, I think we have discussed this matter long enough. We are all agreed, I feel certain, in the premises. I am sure our Presbyterian brother sees the result of his proposition also and will withdraw his resolution. And as time is pressing,' continued the Methodist, 'I think it would be better for me to read my paper.'

"The Presbyterian, in the face of this overwhelming sentiment, at last nodded his head in answer to the Methodist's appeal, though he did it with evident reluctance.

"Gentlemen," said the Bishop, "my heart gave a great leap of joy, though my emotions changed in a moment when the Methodist minister continued, as he took out his bulky manuscript, 'Of course, Brother Pidgley could not sign that paper.' Then he stopped, looked at me shrewdly over his spectacles, and added, 'and come to think of it, my young Episcopalian brother, you could not have signed it either.'"



CONVENTIONALITIES

BY GRACE F. PENNYPACKER

ON life's broad road convention's rails of steel
Limit, but smooth, the way for action's wheel.

A ROSE AND A THORN

By Henry Collins Walsh



WITH a party of friends I had been engaged in hunting and exploring over the beautiful mountains of Spanish Honduras. It was a sultry afternoon in January, and I had gotten far in advance of my companions by giving chase to a bird of brilliant plumage which was ever flying before me and lighting just out of range. Finally an opportunity presented itself, and I fired at long range without waiting to dismount from my mule. I do not know the effect of the shot upon the bird, so painfully was I made aware of its effect upon the mule. Startled at a report so close to its long ears, that animal gave a plunge and sped like a deer through the forest. Whatever sensibilities the animal may have possessed did not discover themselves in her mouth. I resigned all hope of attempting to check her, and gave my whole attention to dodging branches of trees and bushes as we sped along. But, as even a frightened mule is subject to the laws of nature and to fatigue, we at length came to a halt on the shore of one of those beautiful streams so frequent in Honduras.

While I was reconnoitring and wondering whether I had better cross the stream and push onward, or attempt to retrace my mule's rapid footsteps in the hope of rejoining my comrades, a mozo, or native Indian, came along. I immediately fell into conversation with him, and a mozo always has time to talk. I discovered that I was about two days' ride from Santa Barbara, the town towards which my party was pushing with the intention of remaining for a few days. I also learned from my new-found friend that he belonged to a plantation near by owned by a Gringo, or foreigner. As there is a feeling of comradeship among most of the Gringos in Central America, I made up my mind to pass the night at the plantation.

It was growing dusk, and as we rode along I questioned the mozo about his master, learning among other things that he was married to a native girl.

It was not long before we came upon a gate-way between stone walls, and entering here we rode along by groves of banana- and graceful, lithe coffee-trees, until we came to a comfortable dwelling-house surrounded by a beautiful garden. For a moment at a window there appeared a lovely vision of a girl of a type common in Honduras, half-

Indian, half-Spanish; two strains of blood that produce some charming specimens of womanhood: dark, dreamy eyes, glossy, raven hair, white, even teeth, and an olive skin through which blush the roses of Castile.

I crossed the threshold of the house in the hope of seeing the beautiful face again, but instead I was greeted by a short and stocky German, who turned out to be the lord of the manor. I explained my belated condition, and was received with a hearty welcome and an invitation to remain for the night. I was shown to a room and was shortly summoned to dinner. Now, I thought, I shall certainly see my fair vision again, but again I was doomed to disappointment. Don Rudolf, as he was called by the servants, dined with me alone.

We had a pleasant evening together, nevertheless, for my host proved to be a man of rare information, and we had an aftermath of talk over coffee and cigars that lasted far into the night. But not a word did my host say concerning his domestic relations, and though I was very curious to know whether the beautiful girl I had seen was the Don's wife, I could not well question him, especially as marriage between a foreigner and a native girl is not regarded with favor in Honduras.

The next morning I arose immediately after the coffee and rolls, which are served in the bedroom at about seven in the morning in Honduran households, and strolled out into the garden. It was a beautiful day, and all nature was astir; from the trees came the calls of many birds of brilliant plumage, and the plants and flowers looked fresh and radiant after their all-night bath of dew.

I saw a girl picking flowers, and went over to her to say my "Buenos dias, Senorita!" She was an exceedingly pretty girl, but hers was not the face that had so excited my interest on the previous day. However, I had scarcely exchanged a few compliments before my vision appeared, and a vision of loveliness she was indeed! Rosa was her appropriate name, for like a Spanish rose she seemed, to which the dark flush of Indian blood but lent an additional charm. The name of her pretty companion was Theresa, and the girls, I discovered, were sisters, and had been brought up and educated in Guatemala City, where they learned to speak English in a somewhat broken but altogether charming manner.

Naturally, with this common link between us we soon were on very friendly terms. We wandered about the garden among the beautiful flowers, and ere long some call took Theresa indoors, and I was left alone with Rosa.

I knew that one of these girls must be the wife of my German host, and I would have given worlds to know which one, but delicacy forbade my questioning Rosa on this. So we strolled onward until we came to an inviting arbor covered with roses, and here we seated ourselves and breathed in the delicious coolness and fragrance of the morning.

Just outside the arbor I recognized my mule, which was being rubbed

down by a mozo preparatory to saddling and bridling it for my benefit. A strange mule is always an object of interest in Honduras, and Rosa's eyes scrutinized it closely. As the mozo pulled the animal forward a little it appeared to limp slightly, and Rosa at once exclaimed: "Oh, the poor beast! that hind leg is swollen. You should not travel to-day, but give the mule a good rest."

I must say that the leg indicated did not seem abnormally large to me, but I caught eagerly at an excuse for delay, and agreed with Rosa that it would indeed be a case of cruelty to animals to mount the beast that day. Under the inspiration of Rosa's eyes I felt a new-born love and consideration spring up within me for a monster that hitherto had excited only the most profound aversion. Just then Don Rudolf came upon the scene, and after exchanging greetings I told him that I feared my mule had gone somewhat lame.

"Pardon me," he said courteously, "but I am glad to hear it, for now you must remain with us at least until to-morrow."

I thanked him, and then we all walked in to breakfast, which in Honduras is usually served at about eleven o'clock. After breakfast Don Rudolf invited me to accompany him over his plantation, and as this covered several thousand acres we were in the saddle the entire day, and only returned in time for dinner. All day long my host had talked to me of coffee-raising and kindred topics, but as he said nothing about his domestic relations I was as much in the dark as ever as to which of the two girls had the honor of being his better half.

Soon after our arrival at the house dinner was announced, and to my delight the ladies made their appearance, looking fresh and charming in their cool white garments. Just as we were seating ourselves there came galloping up to the door a young native dandy picturesquely attired, and wearing on his head a wide-brimmed conical hat, on top of which, like a weather-vane, was perched a small stuffed rooster. He was greeted by all as an old friend, and was introduced to me as Don Juan Juarez, the son of a neighboring planter.

As the dinner progressed Don Rudolf and Don Juan entered into an earnest conversation in Spanish, a language I am not much at home in, so I devoted my entire attention to the ladies, with whom I conversed in English. I could perceive that Don Juan was not altogether pleased with this arrangement, but, nevertheless, it continued with occasional interruptions throughout the evening. He grew moody and silent, and finally, when he arose to go, though he bade me good-by with extravagant courtesy, I noted a gleam in his eyes that boded me no good-will.

Shortly after the guest's departure I bade my friends farewell, as they were retiring for the night, for I felt that I should be off at day-break, and did not wish to disturb their slumbers. Don Rudolf courteously begged me to remain longer, but I was already conscience-

stricken at the thought of the anxiety I must have caused my companions, from whom I had been separated on the previous day. So I expressed my regrets and thanked my host for his kind hospitality.

The cook, a venerable Indian woman, was instructed to call me at daybreak, and to prepare for me the customary coffee and tortillas. Promptly at sunrise the old cook entered my room bearing a tray, and not long afterwards I was mounted on my mule once more. As I rode by the house I thought I heard a soft call, and looking in its direction I beheld the beautiful Rosa at a window on the lower floor. In an instant I held her delicate little hand in mine to say good-by.

The house was wrapped in slumber, and not a creature was stirring about the grounds save some strident-voiced early-rising parrots among the trees. My face was just on a level with Rosa's, her cheeks were flushed with roses fanned by the morning breeze, her eyes were bewitching and tender. How could I help but bend and kiss her?

Then, as if startled by even so slight a sound, my mule, frisky with rest, was off with a bound, displaying, I must say, not the slightest sign of lameness. Once I turned in my saddle and doffed my hat, and the fair Rosa blew me a kiss from the tips of her dainty fingers, as if to assure me that my temerity had not displeased her; then down I plunged in a steep ravine, and house and all were lost to sight.

How pretty Rosa had looked framed in that window, about which a delicate vine clung gracefully; so Eve must have looked from out a bower in Eden. And was I the serpent gliding away from Paradise, and had my lips pressed those not of a maid, but of a wife? Well, I was now fleeing from temptation; to be sure, my mule had the bit in its mouth, but then virtue is often aided by some such mulish trick.

My mule and I travelled well that day, stopping once for refreshment, and then on until the dusk fell about us, when we encamped beneath the shelter of a spreading India-rubber tree. I tethered the beast, gave her fodder, partook of a light repast myself, and then swung my hammock for the night. I was just about to give myself up to its comforting folds when there loomed into sight a mule and a man. The man proved to be none other than my friend of the previous evening with the rooster-embellished hat, and I cannot say that I was overjoyed to see him. But without consulting my wishes in the matter, he dismounted, tied his mule to a tree, and with a salute took a seat beside me. His face appeared to be flushed with wine, and he was somewhat incoherent; as I have said, I understood but little Spanish, and in his present condition I could not understand Don Juan at all. Suddenly he plucked a dagger from my belt and examined it critically while he measured it with one that he drew from his. He then returned my weapon and commenced to jab at me with his dagger, laughing all the while as if he were indulging in pure fun.

It was a most uncomfortable situation for me, for I could not tell whether the man was really attempting to take my life or not, hence I kept simply on the defensive. I arose from my sitting posture and so did Don Juan. He danced about me for a moment, and then made a lunge that might have resulted seriously had I not had the good fortune in parrying to strike the dagger from his hand. I placed my foot on the fallen weapon and stood with mine ready to strike in my hand. Don Juan simply laughed and sat down, so I sat down again also, but took care to keep my foot on the Don's dagger.

And thus we remained for some time regarding each other in gloomy silence. It was a decidedly uncomfortable position for me, and I do not think my companion enjoyed it much either. He appeared to be coming to his sober senses, but then soberness, I reflected, might only aid him in carrying out a preconceived plan of carving my body, for evidently he had been following me that day. However, he had kindly refrained from shooting me in the back, and his notion of honor had armed him only with a dagger and some native fire-water, which latter had not helped his cause. He could only attack me again by recovering his dagger, and this I was bound he should not do.

I would have given a good deal to know why Don Juan had followed me that day, and who had inspired him to attack me. Was it Rosa or Theresa? One of these fair ones was a maiden with a hand to bestow, and for this hand Don Juan was evidently a suitor. Heavens, how I longed to discover whose hand this was!

Under the circumstances I could not well question the now silent Don upon so delicate a matter. I had grown desperate under the strain of the situation, and would willingly have handed my antagonist back his dagger and fought for Rosa; but suppose this-rooster-bedecked idiot had ridden all this way to cross daggers for the sake of Theresa! Such a game was not worth the candle for me; I had no heart for such a fight.

As the night wore on the Don appeared to be absorbed in deep thought; it took him a long time to grasp the situation. Finally, perhaps, it dawned upon him that he was making a fool of himself, and that it was a useless waste of time to look daggers at me while I had his weapon safe in my possession, for at length, to my intense relief, he arose, untied his mule, and without so much as a "Buenas noches" to me, jumped into his saddle and rode off into the night.

Next day I found my comrades in Santa Barbara, and from thence a fortnight's ride brought us to the coast, where we caught a steamer for home. At times amid the busy hum of a crowded city come dreams and memories of the lotus land of Honduras, the land of fruits and flowers, of bright skies and untroubled days. And sometimes I see the face of Rosa looking from out her vine-clad window; but her face still baffles me; I have not solved her riddle yet. Quien sabe?

THE INTERVENTION OF GRAN'PAP

A CAMP-MEETING STORY

By Ella Middleton Tybout



"G 'WINE tuh Buck Camp, Sistah Simmons?"

"Well, I dunno hahdly, Uncle Ben. I 'lowed I'd be dah sho', but Vinny she's hopin' tuh go along wid Ike Lewis in a buggy, so dah's nobody tuh leave wid de baby, an I ain't no hand tuh tote a baby when I goes pleasurin'."

"Yo' bettah go, sistah, yo' bettah go. It's g'wine tuh be a great day at de Buck; de new preacher f'om down de State's comin'; dey do say he's a powerful 'zorter, an' I 'specs we'll bring de sins of many home tuh 'em. We needs yo', Sistah Simmons, we needs yo' bad tuh labor wid po' souls aftah we gits 'em down on de mo'nahs' bench. Whut's a baby tuh a soul, tell me dat, Sistah Simmons?"

"Hit's got one of its own comin' on, I'll tell yo' dat much, Uncle Ben, an' whut's mo', I ain't g'wine tuh leave meh baby fuh no lazy niggah's soul."

"No 'fence meant, Mis' Simmons; none took, I hope. Well, I must be joggin'. So long, sistah, so long."

Mrs. Simmons went on hanging out the family wash. Through the open window she could see her daughter, Lavinia, busily engaged in ironing a white frock to be worn on the morrow. Asleep on the lounge lay the baby, Violet Clare, on whose account Mrs. Simmons must forego the camp-meeting. Digging angle-worms for bait, near the wood-pile, was her son Isaiah, a sooty youth of thirteen years. She looked around on her assembled family and shook her head:

"I sho'ly ought tuh be dah," she muttered; "I sho'ly ought tuh be dah."

"I'se got meh frock all ironed, mammy," remarked Lavinia as they sat at supper that evening, "an' it do look mighty nice. I nevah seen a rale big camp befo'; 'spects maybe I'll git 'ligion."

"Ho!" said Isaiah contemptuously as he accomplished the difficult feat of putting a corn-cake in his mouth without cutting it; "ho! Yo' git 'ligion! All yo' wants is tuh go wid Ike Lewis an' w'ar yo' best clo'es."

Mrs. Simmons sighed heavily.

"Vinny," she said, "po' ole gran'pap's failin' rapid. I was tole down tuh de sto' dat he can't las' many days mo'. Po' ole gran'pap! I'se all de chile he's got."

"Laws, mammy," cried Isaiah, "I seen gran'pap——"

"Shet yo' mouf, yo' limb o' Satan," said his mother, turning hastily upon him. "Ain't yo' got no manna's? Settin' dah gorgin' yo'self till yo're fit to bust, an' interruptin' of yo' eldahs wid yo' mouf full o' vittles. Keep quiet till yo're spoke to."

"But, mammy——"

Mrs. Simmons glanced in an expressive manner at the mantel-shelf, on which stood a stout hickory switch. Isaiah had a personal acquaintance with that switch and judged it best to be silent, but he relieved his feelings by sticking out his tongue at his mother whenever she looked the other way.

"Vinny, honey," resumed Mrs. Simmons in tones of liquid sweetness, "I does mos' mightily hate tuh disapp'int yo', chile, but I mus' go tuh gran'pap to-morrow. I'se all de chile he's got, Vinny, an' dah's nobody else tuh help him pass ovah Jordan. Of co'se, darlin', yo' mus' take keer of de baby fuh mammy while she's gone."

Lavinia remained silent from astonishment, while Mrs. Simmons resorted to her apron to wipe the tears from her eyes.

"Hit's a mighty sad 'casion fuh me," she resumed in broken accents,— "mighty sad. He's de onliest daddy I'se got, an' he's passin' away fas'. Hain't yo' got nothin' tuh say, yo' unnatural gal? Yo' own gran'pap! An' yo' not willin' tuh stay home jes' onct an' let him die! But yo' got tuh stay, miss, whuthah yo' likes it or not; so mind, I tell yo'."

Experience had taught Lavinia the futility of argument with her parent. She doubted her grandfather's illness, but was afraid to say so, and merely relapsed into sullen silence.

Bright and early the next morning Mrs. Simmons prepared to set out on her errand of mercy.

"Good-by, honey," she said to Lavinia; "don't yo' let nothin' hap-pen tuh mammy's chile. An' as fuh yo', Isaiah, don't yo' leave dis yard to-day, an' mind whut yo' sistah tells yo'. I hopes I'll git tuh po' ole gran'pap in time, but I dunno, I dunno; I 'spects he's gittin' weakah ev'ry minute."

Lavinia watched her mother's broad back disappear down the road, then went up to her room, the light of a mighty resolution shining in her eyes.

"I'se g'wine," she muttered; "I'se g'wine wid Ike when he comes fuh me. I don't keer whut happens, I'se g'wine tuh de Buck to-day."

She arrayed herself in her best clothes, then sought her brother, who

sat on the door-step whittling, and deposited the baby in his unwilling arms, charging him to take good care of it until her return. Turning a deaf ear to his inquiries where she was going, she started off in the direction her mother had gone, and was shortly overtaken by a young mulatto with a fine new buggy, into which she got, and they drove off.

Isaiah sat on the door-step and held the baby. He had no love for babies at any time, but to-day they seemed especially unnecessary. The Jones family passed on their way to camp; they were all going, even the little children. Isaiah pondered on the unequal division of the good things of this world. Aunt Sarah Dixon inquired if she might leave her basket, to be called for; Isaiah had no objection, so she put it in the kitchen. Two cronies of his own appeared; evidently they were not going to camp, for they carried fishing-rods and lovely tin cans full of earthworms. Isaiah had a tin can of his own out by the gate. He placed the baby on the ground and ran down to speak to them.

"Whuh yo' g'wine?" he demanded.

"Feeshin'; come along."

"Don't want tuh go feeshin'."

"Ho! 'Fraid of yo' mammy! 'Fraid-cat, 'fraid-cat! Got tuh tend de baby. Y-a-a-h!"

There was murder in Isaiah's eye as he threw stones at his retreating friends.

Violet Clare on the ground wailed dismally, and Isaiah regarded her with an unfraternal expression.

"Well, cry den," he said, "holler. Who keers ef yo' does? Wisht dah wasn't no babies in de world; wisht dah hadn't nevah been none."

Isaiah passed a miserable morning, but about noon his charge fell asleep. He laid her on the lounge and went out into the yard. The sun had gone under a cloud, but between the trees he could see the glimmer of the canal.

"'Spects de feesh is bitin' fine," he murmured.

His fishing-rod stood suggestively near at hand; the very worms in the tin can wriggled invitingly and seemed to be asking for the hook. Isaiah dug his bare toes into the soft earth and fairly quivered. Then he went and looked at the sleeping baby; he knew she was safe for an hour or two, why should he not enjoy himself? Suddenly an inspiration occurred to him. On the shelf was the paregoric bottle, known as "draps." Many a time he had seen the child quieted by a judicious dose; perhaps if he gave her some now she might sleep another hour or two. He knew the proper amount, but, wishing to make assurance doubly sure, he largely increased the quantity and poured it down the throat of the sleeping child. Then he looked for a safe place to put her. She might roll off the lounge; the same objection held good with regard to the bed. He scratched his head doubtfully,

but as he did so his eye fell on the basket left by Aunt Sarah Dixon. It was a straw hamper with lids opening each side of the handle, and quite large enough to hold the baby. Isaiah thought she might sleep very comfortably there. Somebody's laundry was on its way to the wash, but he had no scruples about removing it and placing a pillow in the bottom, on which he laid the slumbering infant; he replaced the mosquito-netting which had covered the clothes and closed one lid, leaving the one at her feet open for ventilation.

"Nobody won't know," he reflected. "I'll be home fust, an' nobody won't know."

He closed the door securely, but when he got outside he leaned through the window and looked once more at the basket; then he applied his thumb to his nose, wriggled his fingers derisively at the unconscious infant, and started for the canal with a wild whoop.

Down at the Buck Lavinia was finding the camp not quite all her fancy painted it. She had quarrelled with her escort, and he had not come near her since their arrival; therefore she feared she would have to walk home. She had not been altogether surprised to see her mother, and much of the day had been spent in dodging her. Consequently she was not happy. Night approached, and as darkness gathered the woods filled with people from all over the surrounding country. She thought she would go and hear the preaching.

The speaker stood on a log in a cleared place about in the centre of the wood; behind him, in a semicircle, stood men with lighted torches which flickered strangely, casting lurid flames against the black background of trees. In front of him were gathered the faithful who had long ago got religion, and were close at hand to start the singing, say "Amen!" or "Praise the Lord!" in the proper place, and to comfort and exhort those whose sins had suddenly become oppressive to them. Prominent in this group was Mrs. Simmons.

Lavinia sat on a log and listened to the preacher:

"Breddern an' sistern," he was saying, "as I done tole yo' befo', I takes meh tex' f'om de Bible. Not f'om de New Tessamint nuh de Ole Tessamint, but jes' f'om de Bible. Anywhus betwux' its kivvers, 'scusin' maybe de Song o' Solomon, yo' kin fin' it. An' whut do it say, tell me dat? whut do it say? It say 'Be good,' an' it say it loud an' strong. Does yo' want tuh go tuh Heav'n? Ef yo' does, yo' got tuh min' yo' mannaahs. Whut yo' come hyah fo' to-day? Did yo' come tuh walk ahm in ahm wid Laz'rus? Did yo' come tuh climb de ladder wid Jacob, an' fight de lions wid Dannel? or did yo' come tuh show yo' clo'es an' meet yo' frien's?"

"A-a-a-men! Praise de Lawd!" arose from the faithful.

Here an old man, in quavering accents, started a hymn which was

taken up by one after the other of the assembly until the woods rang with the chorus:

"Roll, Jordan, roll!

Roll, Jordan, roll!

I wants tuh go tuh Heav'n when I die,

Tuh hyah Sweet Jordan roll."

"Sistah, will yo' be dah? Dat's whut I wants tuh know. When ole Jordan am a-rollin' an' a-ragin', will yo' be dah, in yo' white robes an' wid yo' crown o' glory? I'se feared yo' ain't all g'wine tuh be settin' in de Kingdom tuh hyah Sweet Jordan roll when ole Gabriel am a blowin' of de las' hohn."

With a loud cry of "Lawd, have mercy on meh soul," Lavinia rushed forward and cast herself on the mourners' bench.

"Hyah's a po' I'il lamb strayed f'om de fole. Sistah Simmons, will yo' pray wid huh, an' show huh de way home?"

Mrs. Simmons, whose attention had been wandering, did not recognize her daughter in the prostrate figure, so she bent over her and half carried her to a secluded spot near by.

"Po' soul," she said, "don't take on so, honey. Yo' po' sinful heart's strivin' fo' peace, an' de good Lawd's g'wine tuh give it tuh yo'. Look up now an' be thankful yo' sin has found yo' out."

She forcibly removed the girl's hands from before her face. For a moment the two sat on the ground and stared at each other, speechless. Mrs. Simmons was the first to recover herself.

"Vinny," she said, punctuating her remarks by vigorous shakes, "Vinny! Sakes alive! Whuh meh baby? Whut yo' doin' hyah? Whuh meh baby? Whuh Vi'let Clare?"

Lavinia rallied.

"Mammy," she said, "how's po' ole gran'pap? Was yo' in time tuh help him pass ovah Jordan?"

"Lavinia Simmons," said her mother solemnly, "we'se all sinnahs, mo' er less. Me an' yo'll staht fuh home dis instan' minute an' see ef any hahm's come tuh meh baby, an ef it have——"

Isaiah started cheerfully home from the canal when it suited him to do so, untroubled by any remembrance of neglected duty. He was surprised not to hear the lamentations of Violet Clare as he approached the house, so went in somewhat fearfully and looked around.

There was no basket; there was no baby. Frantically he searched both house and woodshed. The child was gone.

Suddenly a horrible idea occurred to him. He had often heard his mother discuss medical students generally, and the various ways by which they got children and hid them in dissecting-rooms for future use. Isaiah knew all about these dark practices and trembled with fear.

"It's stujents," he thought; "stujents has got huh an' dey'll git me too."

Night came on, and he cast apprehensive glances at the gathering darkness. The lost baby and the retribution awaiting him when his mother returned were both forgotten, and he thought only of the dreadful fate in store for him. At last footsteps were heard on the path and he made a wild dash for the woodshed, from which retreat he was presently dragged ruthlessly forth.

"Lemme go," he gasped, "lemme go. I ain't done nothin'."

"Ain't done nothin', ain't yo'," returned his mother's voice. "Whut yo' hidin' fuh, ef yo' ain't done nothin'? Whuh meh baby? Has yo' been an' los' meh chile? Quit rollin' up de wites o' yo' eyes an' tell me whut yo' done wid meh chile. Whuh meh baby?"

"I nevah done it. Hope tuh die I nevah done lef' de house. Stujents come an' stole huh while I was gittin' huh bottle fixed. I seen 'em hidin' huh in de kerriage an' I hollered tuh 'em tuh drap huh, but dey kep' right on, an' dey's comin' back fuh me too. Oh mammy, don't let 'em git me! Don't let 'em git me!"

"Oh meh baby," wailed Mrs. Simmons, wringing her hands. "Oh meh l'il, l'il chile! Stole by de stujents! I knowed dah was trubble comin' tuh dis house when I seen de cheer a-rockin' an' dah wasn't nobody in it! I knowed I'se g'wine tuh see trubble when de bird flew in de windah. Whuh meh baby? Whut dey done tuh meh baby?"

Mrs. Simmons wept aloud in an agony of grief; Lavinia joined her in a tumult of regret at deserting her charge; and Isaiah howled loudest of all in vivid anticipation of future events.

Suddenly loud, determined knocking was heard on the front door.

"De stujents!" gasped Isaiah, his blood turning to ice in his veins.

"Vinny," whispered Mrs. Simmons, seizing the poker, "fill de dippah wid b'ilin' watah, an' when I h'ists de pokah fling it in dey faces. Dey done got meh baby, but dey ain't g'wine tuh git no mo'."

The knocking was repeated.

"W-h-h-h-o dah?" said Mrs. Simmons, with chattering teeth.

"Fo' de Lawd's sake," replied Aunt Sarah Dixon, as she opened the door and walked in, bearing in her arms the missing baby. "Fo' de Lawd's sake! Whut de mattah wid yo' all? Hyah's yo' chile, Mis' Simmons. Rube, he done tuck huh home wid him in de clo'es-basket, whuh she was a-sleepin' an' nevah knowed it. He done fotch huh back twict, but dah wasn't nobody round, 'ceptin' Isaiah (he seen him kitin' off todes de canal), so he took huh home an' kep' huh safe all day. Rube done stop hyah as I tole him fuh Miss Molly's wash dat I lef' in de hampah, an' he found de baby 'stid o' de clo'es when he unktivvered de basket. But she ain't a mite de wuss, an' so no hahm's done. So long, Mis' Simmons."

Dead silence prevailed after Mrs. Dixon's departure. The eye of his mother was on Isaiah and he quailed before it. Presently she said in a dangerously polite tone,—

"Huccome meh baby in dat basket?"

No answer. Mrs. Simmons reached for the switch on the mantel.

"Whuh yo' specs tuh go when yo' dies?" she demanded. "Yo' done went off an' left de baby, an' tole me yo' seen de stujents hidin' huh in de kerriage. Maybe I could have 'scused yo' runnin' off feeshin'; maybe I could; but whut I can't 'scuse nohow is de lies yo' done tole me. Don't yo' know whut comes tuh boys dat tells lies? It's a wondah de good Lawd don't strike yo' daid. Yo' done make me b'lieve meh baby was stole by de stujents, an' now I'se g'wine tuh make yo' wish de stujents had a-got yo' sho' 'nuff. I'se g'wine tuh learn yo' tuh tell lies tuh yo' mammy."

Isaiah watched his mother and breathed quickly. He saw that he must act, and that at once.

"Mammy," he cried, "I seen gran'pap down to de canal, an' he done tole me——"

The hand stretched forth to seize Isaiah's collar dropped heavily as Mrs. Simmons gazed from one of her offspring to the other in a furtive manner. Then she suddenly threw an arm around each, drawing both into her capacious embrace.

"We'se all po', mizzable sinnahs," she said, "but meh baby am back all safe an' soun, an' gran'pap am snatched f'om de jaws o' death by de han' o' de Lawd, so we won't say no mo' about it, but jine in singin' 'Praise Gawd f'om whom all blessin's flows,' an' take off our bes' clo'es an' go tuh baid."



MIDNIGHT

BY MARY FORNEY THUNDER

THE moon crept over the mountain edge
 And made a path of light;
 The clouds swept over my hoping heart
 And made of it dark night.
 Then of a sudden the wind arose,
 Like a giant out of the sea,
 Playing and tossing the feathery film,
 Showering light o'er me.
 Ah, the sweet peace that follows pain,
 The silent, sacred rest!
 Soul of my soul, thine incense I breathe,
 Dreaming the night is blest.

THE MORTIFICATION OF THE FLESH

By Paul Laurence Dunbar

Author of "The Sport of the Gods," "The Uncalled," etc.



FIRST IN A SERIES OF OHIO PASTORALS

NATHAN FOSTER and his life-long friend and neighbor, Silas Bollender, sat together side by side upon the line fence that separated their respective domains. They were both whittling away industriously, and there had been a long silence between them. Nathan broke it, saying, "'Pears to me like I've had oncommon good luck this year."

Silas paused and carefully scrutinized the stick he was whittling into nothing at all, and then resumed operations on it before he returned: "Well, you have had good luck, there ain't no denyin' that. It 'pears as though you've been ee-specially blest."

"An' I know I ain't done nothin' to deserve it."

"No, of course not. Don't take no credit to yoreself, Nathan. We don't none of us deserve our blessin's, however we may feel about our crosses: we kin be purty shore o' that."

"Now look," Nathan went on; "my pertater vines was like little trees, an' nary a bug on 'em."

"An' you had as good a crop o' corn as I've ever seen raised in this part o' Montgomery County."

"Yes, an' I sold it, too, jest before that big drop in the price."

"After givin' away all the turnips you could, you had to feed 'em to the hogs."

"My fruit-trees jest had to be propped up, an' I've got enough preserves in my cellar to last two er three winters, even takin' into consideration the drain o' church socials an' o' cherity."

"Yore chickens air fat an' sassy, not a sign o' pip among 'em."

"Look at them cows in the fur pasture. Did you ever seen anything to beat 'em fur sleekness?"

"Well, look at the pasture itself: it's most enough to make human bein's envy the critters. You didn't have a drop o' rain on you while you was gettin' yore hay in, did you?"

"Not a drop."

"An' I had a whole lot ruined jest as I was about to rick it."

So, alternately, they went on enumerating Nathan's blessings, until it seemed that there was nothing left for him to desire.

"Silas," he said solemnly, "sich luck as I'm a-havin' is achilly skeery; it don't seem right."

Silas had a droll humor of his own, and his eyes twinkled as he said: "No, it don't seem right fur a religious man like you, Nathan. Ef you was a hard an' graspin' sinner it 'u'd be jest what a body'd 'spect. You could understand it then: the Lord 'u'd jest be makin' you top-heavy so's yore fall 'u'd be the greater."

"I do' know but what that's it anyhow. Mebbe I'm a-gittin' puffed up over my goods without exactly knowin' it."

"Mebbe so, mebbe so. Them kind o' feelin's is mighty sneaky comin' on a body. O' course, I ain't seen no signs of it yit in you; but it 'pears to me you'll have to mortify yore flesh yit to keep from bein' purse-proud."

"Mortify the flesh," repeated Nathan seriously.

"O' course, you can't put peas in yore shoes er git any of yore friends to lash you, so you'll have to find some other way o' mortifyin' yore flesh. Well, fur my part, I don't need to look fur none, fur I never had too many blessin's in my life, less'n you'd want to put the children under that head."

Silas shut up his jack-knife with a snap and, laughing, slid down on his side of the fence. In serious silence Nathan Foster watched him go stumping up the path towards his house. "Silas seems to take everything so light in this world," he breathed half aloud. "I wonder how he can do it."

With Nathan, now, it was just the other way. Throughout his eight-and-forty years he had taken every fact of life with ponderous seriousness. Entirely devoid of humor, he was a firm believer in signs, omens, tokens, and judgments. Though the two men had grown up together and been friends from a boyhood spent upon their fathers' adjoining farms, their lives had been two very different stories. Silas, looking on everything cheerily, had married early and was the father of a houseful of children. His wife ruled him with a rod of iron, but he accepted her domination quite as a matter of course and went merrily on his way. He had never been a very successful man, but he had managed to hold the old homestead and feed and clothe his family. This seemed entirely to satisfy him.

On the other hand, to Nathan marriage had always seemed an undertaking fraught with so much danger that he had feared to embark upon it, and although in his younger days his heart had often burned within him when he contemplated some charming damsel, these heart-burnings

had gone unknown to anyone but himself until someone else had led the girl to the altar. So he was set down as not a marrying man. He was essentially a cautious man, and through caution and industry his means had grown until from being well-to-do the people of Montgomery County spoke of him as a rich old bachelor. He was a religious man, and with the vision of Dives in his mind his wealth oppressed and frightened him. He gave to his church and gave freely. But he had the instinct for charity without the faculty for it. And he was often held back from good deeds by a modesty which told him that his gifts would be looked upon as "Alms to be seen of men."

As usual, he had taken his friend's bantering words in hard earnest and was turning them over in his mind. When the bell rang, calling him in to supper, he flung the stick which he had been whittling into the middle of the potato patch and stood watching abstractedly where it fell. Then, as if talking to it, he murmured, "Mortification of the flesh," and started moving slowly to the kitchen.

The next morning, when Nathan and Silas met to compare notes, the former began, "I been thinking over what you said last night, Silas, about me mortifying my flesh, and it seems to me like a good idee."

Silas looked at him quizzically from beneath bent brows, but Nathan went on, "I wrasseled in prayer last night, and it was shown to me that it wa'n't no more'n right fur me to make some kind o' sacrifice fur the mercies that's been bestowed upon me."

"Well, I do' know, Nathan; burnt offerings air a little out now."

"I don't mean nothin' like that; I mean some sacrifice of myself; some——"

His sentence was broken in upon by a shrill voice that called from Silas Bollender's kitchen door: "Si, you'd better be gittin' about yore work instid o' standin' over there a-gassin' all the mornin'. I'm shore I don't have no time to stand around."

"All right, Mollie," he called back to his wife, and then, turning to Nathan, he said, "Speakin' of mortifyin' the flesh an' makin' a sacrifice of yoreself, why don't you git married?"

Nathan started.

"Then, you see," Silas continued, "you'd be shore to accomplish both. Fur pure mortification of the flesh, I don't know of nothin' more thorough-goin' er effectiver than a wife. Also she is a vexation of the sperrit. Look at me an' Mis' Bollender, fur instance. Do you think I need a hair shirt when I think I'm gittin' over-fed? No. Mis' Bollender keeps me with a meek an' subdued sperrit. You raaly ought to marry, Nathan."

"Do you think so?"

"It looks like to me that that 'u'd be about as good a sacrifice as you could make, an' then it's sich a lastin' one."

"I don't believe that you realize what you air a-sayin', Silas. It's a mighty desprit step that you're advisin' me to take."

Again Mrs. Bollender's voice broke in, "Si, air you goin' to git anything done this mornin', er air you goin' to stand there an' hold up that fence fur the rest o' the day?"

"Nathan," said Silas, "kin you stand here an' listen to a voice an' a speech like that an' then ask me ef I realize the despritness of marriage?"

"It's desprit," said Nathan pensively, "but who'd you advise me to marry, Silas, ef I did,—that is, ef I did make up my mind to marry,—an' I don' jest see any other way."

"Oh, I ain't pickin' out wives fur anybody, but it seems to me that you might be doin' a good turn by marryin' the Widder Young. The Lord 'u'd have two special reasons fur blessin' you then; fur you'd be mortifyin' yore flesh an' at the same time a-helpin' the widder an' orphans."

Nathan turned his honest gray eyes upon his friend, but there was a guilty flush upon his sunburned cheek as he said, "That's so." For the world, he couldn't admit to Silas that he had been thinking hard of the Widow Young even before he had thought of mortifying his flesh with a wife. Now that he had an added excuse for keeping her in his mind, he was guiltily conscious of trying to cheat himself,—of passing off a pleasure for a penance. But his wavering determination was strengthened by the reflection that it was about Mrs. Young, not as a widow, but as a wife and a means of grace, that he was concerned, and the memory of what Silas had said about wives in general had put him right with his conscience again.

The widow was a lively, buxom woman who had seen forty busy summers pass. She had been one of the prettiest and most industrious girls of the village, and it had seemed that Nathan, when a young man, had serious intentions towards her. But his extreme caution had got the better of his inclination, and she had been retired to that limbo where he kept all his secret heart-burnings. She had married a ne'er-do-weel, and until the day of his death, leaving her with two children on her hands, she had had need of all her thrift.

Nathan thought of all these things and a lively satisfaction grew up in his mind. He thought of the good his money would do the struggling woman, of the brightness it would bring into her life. "Well, it's good," he murmured; "I'll be killin' two birds with one stone."

Once decided, it did not take him long to put his plans into execution. But he called Silas over to the fence that evening after he had dressed to pay a visit to the widow.

"Well, Silas," he began, "I've determined to take the step you advised."

"Humph, you made up yore mind quick, Nathan."

Nathan blushed, but said, "I do' know as it's any use a-waitin'; ef a thing's to be done, it ought to be done an' got through with."

"I'll have to ask you, now, ef you realize what a desprit step you're a-takin'?"

"I've thought it over prayerfully."

"I don't want nothin' that I said in lightness of mind to influence you. I do' know as I take sich things as serious as I ought."

"Well, I own up you did start the idee in my head, but I've thought it all over sence an' made up my mind fur myself, an' I ain't to be turned now. What I want partic'lar to know now is, whether it wouldn't be best to tell Lizzie—I mean the widder—that I want her as a means of mortification."

"Well, no, Nathan, I do' know as I would do that jest yit; I don't believe it 'u'd be best."

"But ef she don't know, wouldn't it be obtainin' her under false pertenses ef she said yes?"

"Not exactly the way I look at it, fur you've got more motives fur marryin' than one."

"What! Explain yoreself, Silas, explain yoreself."

"I mean you want to do her good as well as subdue yore own sperrit."

"Oh, yes, that's so."

"Now, no woman wants to know at first that she's a vexation to a man's sperrit. It sounds scriptural, but it don't sound nooptial. Now look at me an' Mis' Bollender. I never told her untell we'd been married more'n six months. Fact is, it never occurred to me before. But she didn't believe it then, an' she won't believe it tell this day. She admits that she's my salvation, but not in that way."

Silas chuckled and his friend chewed a straw and thought long. Finally he said: "Well, I'll agree not to tell her right away, but ef she consents, I must tell her a week er so after we're married. It'll ease my conscience. Ef I could tell her now, it 'ud be a heap easier in gittin' 'round to the question. I don't know jest how to do it without."

"Oh, you won't have no trouble in makin' her understand. Matrimony's a subjc' that women air mighty keen on. They can see that a man's poppin' the question ef he only half tries. You'll git through all right."

Somewhat strengthened, Nathan left his friend and sought the widow's house. He found her stitching merrily away under the light of a coal-oil lamp with a red shade. Even in his trepidation he found secret satisfaction in the red glow that filled the room and glorified the widow's brown hair.

"La, Nathan," said the widow when he was seated, "who'd 'a' expected to see you up here? You've got to be sich a home body that no one don't look to see you outside o' yore own field an' garden."

"I jest thought I'd drop in," said Nathan.

"Well, it's precious kind o' you, I'm shore. I was a-feelin' kind o' lonesome. The children go to bed with the chickens."

For an instant there was a picture in his mind of just such another evening as this, with the children all in bed and the widow sitting across from him or even beside him in another room than this. His heart throbbed, but the picture vanished before his realization of the stern necessity of saying something.

"I jest thought I'd drop in," he said. Then his face reddened as he remembered that he had said that before. But the widow was fully equal to the occasion.

"Well, it does remind me of old times to see you jest droppin' in informal-like, this way. My, how time does fly!"

"It is like old times, ain't it?"

Here they found a common subject, and the talk went on more easily, aided by story and reminiscence. When Nathan began to take account of the time, he found with alarm that two hours had passed without his getting any nearer to his object. From then he attempted to talk of one thing while thinking of another and failed signally. The conversation wavered, recovered itself, wavered again, and then it fell flat.

Nathan saw that his time had come. He sighed, cleared his throat, and began: "Widder, I been thinkin' a good deal lately, an' I been talkin' some with a friend o' mine." He felt guiltily conscious of what that friend had counselled him to keep back. "I've been greatly prospered in my day; in fact, 'my cup runneth over.'"

"You have been prospered, Nathan."

"Seems's ef—seems's ef I'd ought to sheer it with somebody, don't it?"

"Well, Nathan, I do' know nobody that's more generous in givin' to the pore than you air."

"I don't mean jest exactly that way: I mean—widder, you're the mort— I mean the salvation of my soul. Could you—would you—er—do you think you'd keer to sheer my blessin's with me—an' add another one to 'em?"

The Widow Young looked at him in astonishment; then, as she perceived his drift, the tears filled her eyes and she asked, "Do you mean it, Nathan?"

"I wouldn't 'a' spent so much labor on a joke, widder."

"No, it don't seem like you would, Nathan. Well, it's sudden, mighty sudden, but I can't say no."

"Fur these an' all other blessin's make us truly thankful, oh Lord, we ask fur His name's sake—Amen!" said Nathan devoutly. And he sat another hour with the widow, making plans for the early marriage, on which he insisted.

The marriage took place very soon after the brief wooing was done. But the widow had been settled in Nathan's home over a month before he had even thought of telling her of the real motive of his marriage, and every day from the time it occurred to him it grew harder for him to do.

The charm and comfort of married life had wrapped him about as with a mantle, and he was at peace with the world. From this state his conscience pricked him awake, and on a night when he had been particularly troubled he sought his friend and counsellor with a clouded brow. They sat together in their accustomed place on the fence.

"I'm bothered, Silas," said Nathan.

"What's the matter?"

"Why, there's several things. First off, I ain't never told the widder that she was a mortification, an' next, she ain't. I look around at that old house o' mine that ain't been a home sence mother used to scour the hearth an' it makes me feel like singing fur joy. An' I hear them children playin' around me—they're the beatenest children; that youngest one called me daddy yistiddy—well, I see them playin' around an' my eyes air opened, an' I see that the widder's jest another blessin' added to the rest. It looks to me like I had tried to cheat the Almighty."

With a furtive glance in the direction of his house, Silas took out his pipe and filled it, then between whiffs he said: "Well, now, Nathan, I do' know as you've got any cause to feel bothered. You've done yore duty. Ef you've tried to mortify yore flesh an' it refused to mortify, why, that's all you could do, an' I believe the Lord'll take the will fur the deed an' credit you accordin'ly."

"Mebbe so, Silas, mebbe so; but I've got to do more o' my duty, I've got to tell her."

He slipped down from the fence.

"Nathan," called his crony, but Nathan hurried away as if afraid to trust time with his will: "That's jest like him," said Silas, "to go an' spoil it all;" and he walked down his field-path grumbling to himself.

When the new husband reached the house his courage almost failed him, but he rushed in exclaiming, "Widder, I've got to tell you, you're a mortification of the flesh an' a vexation to the sperrit; long may you continuer fur the good of my soul."

Then, his duty being done and his conscience quieted, he kissed her and took one of the children on his knee.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

Sister Teresa. By Mr. Moore's latest novel has to do primarily with the transformation of Evelyn Innes, an opera-singer, into Sister Teresa, a Passionist nun, vowed to perpetual adoration of the Host, and her renunciation of the world of shadows and unrealities for that of the facts founded upon supreme faith. The tale is simple in outline, though even as a story, pure and simple, it is absorbing; furthermore, written as Mr. Moore writes it, with keen knowledge of the light and dark places of the human soul, phrased incisively, the psychological interest of the tale—the portrait of a soul blindly groping its way from the grossest instinctive sin to a spiritual exaltation beyond the comprehension of most of us—transcends the mere curiosity as to plot and circumstance, and rouses attention to the vital importance of the phase of life presented for consideration.

Taken more in detail, though still roughly and superficially, the tale sets forth the fact that Evelyn Innes, after some years of life given over to the fulfilling the desire of the moment, without any deeper thought or scruple of conscience, discovered in herself, beside her instinct of inveterate sensuality, a sincere aspiration for a spiritual life; and in gratifying the aspiration she sought salvation from the instinct. Admitted as a postulante into a convent of Passionist nuns, in which she had long been interested and where she had many friends, she passed through a short novitiate, and was finally admitted to the veil, having found a vocation for a conventual life.

For the sake of convenience the book may be divided into two parts: the period of Evelyn Innes, before her admission to the novitiate, and the period of Sister Teresa, from her first meal among the novices to the close of the tale, which finds her, all scruples gone in the certainty of her vocation, bidding farewell to a friend of her worldly days. In the first part the author portrays Evelyn Innes,—the same Evelyn Innes whose earlier career forms the subject of a former novel, which indeed bears her name,—frankly, instinctively sensual, returning to the world after a short retreat in the convent, and stirred to the depths of an ardent nature by the dimly comprehended vision of the Peace that passeth all human understanding, and by the sight of the happiness that Peace has given to the nuns. The leavening of the whole lump by this little leaven is finely wrought out, and leads naturally to the decisive step, when the convent doors close behind her, and she enters upon her novitiate. The same art that served Mr. Moore so well in the difficult task of portraying the human animal stands him in good stead when, by touches light at times, by the deft accumulation of the merest indicative trifles, by strokes so unsparing as to be almost brutal, he shows the passion of the human soul freeing itself from the entanglement the body would cast about it, and striving towards the ultimate goal, ever upward, though with backward slips not a few. There are few finer or more powerful pieces of work in the psychological fiction of the day than the culminating struggle, when Sister Teresa, some time after taking the veil, is beset with the temptations of bygone days and doubts her vocation, almost to the point of breaking her vows.

Nor is the book without its lighter side. The author has furnished a delightful picture of the daily routine life in a convent of a contemplative Order—of the services in the chapel, the routine of work in the kitchen, the garden, the cells, the sacristy, the sports of the recreation hour, the quiet talks with the Mother Superior; a convent life is not so devoid of human interests as many of us might suppose.

So much for the book, which issues from the Lippincott Press. As for Mr. Moore, he is one of the salient figures in the world of letters, having won his place by careful and consistent work, of which "Sister Teresa" may fairly be considered the high-water mark. He has lately removed from England to Ireland, having found London no longer to his taste. It is evident in his latest book that the removal has in no way interfered with the quality of his work.

"Farewell, Nikola!"
By Guy Boothby.

Playing upon the various phases of occultism, Mr. Boothby—whose "Cabinet Secret" is remembered with pleasure by numerous readers—has produced another romance of convincing interest. Like the "Cabinet Secret," it comes from the Lippincott Press. The tale has to do with Sir Richard and Lady Hatteras, Gertrude Trevor, and the Duke of Glenbarth, who are travelling together and have arrived in Venice; Dr. Nikola, whom they meet in Venice; and Don José de Martinos, who comes with an introduction from a friend of Sir Richard. Other characters help to carry out Mr. Boothby's ingenious plot, which is dominated—as the name suggests—by Dr. Nikola, a student and practiser of the occult sciences, whose lore has made him as nearly omniscient and omnipotent as a mere mortal can be, and who is engaged in avenging upon Don Martinos the wrongs inflicted by that individual upon him in their earliest youth. "Farewell, Nikola!" should duplicate the success of "A Cabinet Secret."

The Cost of Her Pride.
By Mrs. Alexander.

To attempt to criticise Mrs. Alexander's work, or to commend her books to the reading public, is all but unnecessary, so well are they known and so popular among all who read and enjoy the light fiction of the day; and "The Cost of Her Pride," which is the current issue of Lippincott's *Select Novels*, bears favorably even the most rigid comparison with her other work. The tale has to do with Leslie Seton's marriage to George Farrant, rather hastily, it must be admitted, and upon grounds scarcely adequate for the ideal life-long companionship; with Farrant's lack of—but what better could we do than to leave it for Mrs. Alexander herself to enlighten the reader? Suffice it to say that the clouds are not without silver lining, and that the tale ends happily,—a decided relief from the latter-day morbid theory and practice that a tale must end unhappily if it is to be artistic and true to life. In paper and cloth bindings.

South America. By A. H. Keane, F.R.G.S. Illustrated.

This latest volume in "Stanford's Compendium of Geography and Travel" contains exhaustive articles upon the nations of the South American Continent, leaving the European colonies in South America to be treated with Central America and the West Indies in a succeeding volume. But the author has so admirably stated the scope and intent of his volume that we cannot do better than to let him speak for himself.

"In the new issue of this series the single volume originally devoted to Central America, the West Indies, and South America is replaced by two, each somewhat larger than their predecessor. The very ample additional space thus secured has been found no more than sufficient to embody the more important results of the numerous scientific expeditions made to almost every part of Latin America during the last two decades by Whympers, Conway, Fitzgerald, Crevaux, Thouar, im Thurn, Rodway, Ehrenreich, von den Steinen, Reiss, Church, Stübel, Ball, Brigham, Hill, Romero, Thompson, Seler, and many other distinguished geographers, archaeologists, naturalists, and anthropologists.

Many of the discoveries were of a fundamental character, profoundly modifying the views hitherto prevailing on such questions as the tectonic constitution, both of Central and South America, the West Indian orographic systems, the distribution of plants and animals over the whole area, the cradle and primitive migrations of Caribs and Arawaks; the ethnical relations of Toltecs, Aztecs, and Mayas, of Quichuas (Peruvians) and Aymaras (Bolivians), the origin of the marvellous Tiahuanuco monuments, and of other remains of native American culture. Attention has also been claimed by the recent political changes in the West Indies, by frontier questions, as between British Guiana and Venezuela, and between Chili and Argentina, by inter-ocean ship-canal projects, by transcontinental railway schemes, and by the altered economic conditions, especially in Mexico, Chili, Brazil, and Argentina. All these transformations called for adequate treatment, if only to show that in the New World material and moral progress is no longer confined to "Anglo-Saxon America," and that henceforth the Hispano-Lusitanian commonwealths enter into the comity of the other cultured nations on a footing of absolute equality and independence."

"Stanford's Compendium of Geography and Travel" is too well known to readers of geographical literature to need much comment. A standard in its original and less extended form, it is doubly standard in this revised and enlarged edition, comprising twelve volumes, of which ten have been issued, one (Central America and the West Indies) is in the press for early publication, and one (British Isles and the Countries of Northwestern Europe) is in preparation. The series contains somewhat over one hundred and fifty detailed maps and charts and several hundred illustrations. In fact, as the *Athenæum* puts it, "The new issue of 'Stanford's Compendium of Geography and Travel' is a publication of great value, and contains, in a convenient form, the latest geographical results of travel and research adequately treated. . . . It is useful for educational purposes and for reference, and pleasant to the general reader."

The series is published in America by J. B. Lippincott Company, in conjunction with Edward Stanford, London.

Photographic Atlas of the Diseases of the Skin. By George Henry Fox, A.M., M.D. With Eighty Plates.

This "Atlas" is a perfect reproduction of the large and magnificently colored plates recently prepared by Dr. George Henry Fox, of New York. Eighty of the most striking or typical negatives in his large collection have been reproduced by photography and colored by hand especially for this work, which therefore constitutes a collection of dermatological plates—many of them life-size—unequalled for accuracy and artistic excellence. They are published (by J. B. Lippincott Company) in sixteen monthly parts, of which the present issue is the ninth, each containing five colored plates, with descriptive text, and fourteen pages on "The Treatment of Skin Diseases," giving a concise and practical statement of the therapeutic methods which the author has found of greatest service in his practice.

Arsenic. By Professor J. Alfred Wanklyn, M.R.C.S.

"Recent medical experience points to arsenic as one of the most potent medicinal agencies at the disposal of the physician," writes Professor Wanklyn. "That it is a specific in cases of phthisis has been asserted, and may be true to some extent.

"The form of arsenic recommended for employment for the purpose is Bunsen's kakodylic acid, the marvellous substance containing rather more than half its weight of metallic arsenic, and yet, notwithstanding that it is very soluble in water, absolutely non-poisonous. . . . Under certain conditions,

which are possible and by no means unlikely of realization in the human body, chemical changes might be set up which would transform kakodylic acid into a deadly poison."

A very detailed description of kakodylic acid, with its various chemical relationships, is given by the author, who presents in his book (published by J. B. Lippincott Company) a most exhaustive study of the chemistry of arsenic. His attention was called to the detection of poisons rather more than forty years ago, he tells us, when, as private assistant to Frankland, the well-known eminent chemist, he was concerned with the examination of a supposed case of arsenic poisoning for the sake of insurance money.

The Practice of Medicine. Edited by G. A. Gibson, M.D. Illustrated. Two volumes.

Impressed by the fact that the advances in every department of medical science have created a demand for a work reflecting the best modern teaching, and believing that such a work could be better prepared by the collaboration of authorities than by the efforts of any one man, the Editor has had associated with him in the preparation of "The Practice of Medicine" no less than thirty-six eminent writers, each of whom treated of the subject concerning which his knowledge made him an authority.

"The wisdom of including a preliminary discussion of general etiological and pathological problems, by way of introduction to the more practical portion of the work, has been carefully weighed, and the conclusion reached that such a section would be of real utility. The position of cutaneous diseases has also been a subject of anxious deliberation. Although fully recognizing that in every medical school Dermatology ought to have the thorough teaching which can only be given by a specialist, it has seemed inexpedient to exclude diseases of the skin from a text-book on the Practice of Medicine."

The work, which is exhaustively indexed, is a valuable addition to the Lippincott list of standard works on medicine and allied sciences.

International Clinics. Eleventh Series. Vol. II. Illustrated.

The second volume of the Eleventh Series of this notable work is just now published. Sections are devoted to Therapeutics, Medicine, Neurology, Surgery, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Pediatrics, Pathology, Diseases of the Eye, Laryngology, and Miscellaneous, presenting articles from twenty-eight contributors in the United States and Europe.

Under the head of Miscellaneous is found a valuable article on The Pronunciation and Definition of Some of the Newer Medical Words, a glossary of over two hundred and fifty words that have recently become part of the terminology of medical science, including the names of diseases, medicines, chemical compounds, instruments, etc.; the doses of many of the medicines are indicated, and diseases, operations, instruments, etc., are concisely described. Though any arbitrary selection from such a list of articles is invidious, we may notice specifically those on Surgical Analgesis by Injections of Cocaine into the Spinal Column, Conservative Treatment of Appendicitis, Adulterations of Foods, Smallpox, with Particular Reference to the Prevalent Epidemic, Suggestions as to the Mechanism of Mental Operations, Movement Therapy for Locomotor Ataxia, two other articles on Locomotor Ataxia, Splenectomy, Resources in Narrow Pelvis, Acute Dilatations of the Heart met with during Childhood and Adolescence, Critical Estimate of the Value of Bacteriological Examination of Drinking Water, Herpes Ophthalmicus and its Complications, etc. The volume, which, like its predecessors, comes from the Lippincott Press, is illustrated with plates and figures.

WALNUTS and WINE

Lower
Eight

THE Pullman-car porter had settled himself for a comfortable nap, having snugly tucked away the last of his charges, including the fat man in "Lower Eight" and the timid young thing who had boarded the train at Norfolk. The porter stirred uneasily in his nap, for the snoring that was arising from "Lower Eight" drowned the roar of the train. The snoring came in gurgles, moans, and whistling, the like of which had never been heard in heaven above or on the earth beneath. The curtains of "Lower Eight" had swung slightly open with the lurch of the train, and the fat man could be seen lying on his broad back, with his mouth gaping wide.

As his slumber deepened, he was apparently in the last throes of choking when a neatly rolled umbrella, held in a slender white hand, crept out from "Lower Seven," where the timid young thing was shrinking, and made a vicious jab between the curtains of "Lower Eight."

"Porter! Porter!" came a whoop from "Lower Eight," and the bell trilled wildly.

"What is it, sah?" cried the startled porter as he bounded down the aisle.

"Did you stab me in the side?" demanded the fat man in dire wrath.

"Oh, no, sah!" replied the porter. "I never done no thing like that! You must have been dreaming, sah."

"Confound you! I'm not dreaming!" growled "Lower Eight."

"Well, sah," argued the porter, his black hand concealing his gleaming ivories, "you know that when you turned in you had took a little moah than was jess good fo' any gemman."

"It's mighty funny," muttered "Lower Eight;" but he was not in a position to contradict this statement, so he subsided. The porter returned to the smoking-room, ruminating on the strange hallucinations produced by too long a dallying in the dining-car.

The snores began again in rising crescendo. Just as the teeth of nervous passengers were well set, the umbrella stole again from "Lower Seven," and another vicious lunge made the snore change to a howl of rage.

"Porter!" yelled "Lower Eight," "I tell you someone is stabbing me!"

"Kain't be nuffin' like that, sah," replied the porter, coming up soothingly. "I ain't slept a wink, and nobody's been movin' in this car, or I'd a-seen them. You're jess havin' a bad dream."

"It's no dream!" shouted the fat man. "Why, my side is sore. Feels like there's a hole there you could stick your fist in."

"Now you go to sleep again, sah," coaxed the porter, "and I'll watch that you ain't tetch'd."

The rumble of the train was once more lost in the vocal exercises from "Lower Eight," and the porter, pulling his cap over his eyes, napped in the smoking-compartment.

"Ouch! Ouch! Help! Help!" and a red face shot out of "Lower Eight." The porter slouched up the aisle, disgust written on his countenance.

"Gawd, porter," groaned the fat man. "Is there a doctor on board? I'm horribly punctured! Did you see the villain when he stabbed me?"

"Kain't nobody stab you, sah," remonstrated the porter sternly. "Nobody ain't moved in this car. You've got the deleriam trimmins, that's what's the matter wif you. If you don't lie still and stop your hollerin', me and the conductor is goin' to strap you down."

"I don't see what they mean by putting drunken brutes in the car with ladies," exclaimed an acid voice from "Upper Ten."

"Put him off at the next station. This is supposed to be a sleeping-car," growled "Lower Four." "He hasn't done a thing but keep everybody awake with his infernal grunting since he turned in."

From all along the line of curtains came uncomplimentary comments, but there was silence in "Lower Seven," where lay the timid young thing who had got on at Norfolk.

"Never had such bad dreams in my life," said "Lower Eight," addressing the car in general. "Dreamed the same thing three times in succession. I believe it is a warning. If any accident is going to happen to-night, I die with my boots on. I'm going to get up."

A thrashing about told the other passengers that the fat man was as good as his word. A sigh of relief was breathed through the car as the fat man lumbered by the curtains to the smoking-room, to spend the rest of the night brooding over the mystery.

When the timid young thing crept from her berth the next morning, there was something about the smile which lurked around her mouth that made the porter scratch his head.

Caroline Lockhart ("Suzette").

TO A TORTOISE

By Chauncey Hickox

PALUDAL, glum, with misdirected legs,
 You hide your history as you do your eggs,
 And offer us an osseous nut to crack
 Much harder than the shell upon your back.
 No evolutionist has ever guessed
 Why your cold shoulder is within your chest—
 Why you were discontented with a plan
 The vertebrates accept, from fish to man.
 For what environment did you provide
 By pushing your internal frame outside?
 How came your ribs in this abnormal place?
 Inside your rubber neck you hide your face
 And answer not. To science you're a sphinx—
 A structural epitome of missing links;
 And when decapitated, still you swell
 And kick and claw and scramble just as well.



This is a picture of MARIE FREDONIA ROBB, 219 Chestnut St., Philadelphia. She is a

Mellin's Food Girl

and like all MELLIN'S FOOD children is bright, happy and well. MELLIN'S FOOD and good fresh milk make a modification that is like mother's milk.

That is the reason so many babies thrive on MELLIN'S FOOD.

WE WILL SEND YOU A SAMPLE OF MELLIN'S FOOD FREE UPON REQUEST.

MELLIN'S FOOD COMPANY, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS.

But I'll not plague thee. Even here I find
 A touch of fellowship that makes me kind.
 Sometimes a poet who has lost his head
 Will keep on scratching when he should be dead.

**Resigned to
 His Fate**

In the early Indiana days, when both judges and attorneys literally "rode the circuit," a newly elected Judge, noted for his lack of personal beauty, was plodding along on horseback between two county-seats one fine summer day. Passing through a piece of woods he was suddenly confronted by a hunter, who unslung his squirrel-rifle from his shoulder and ordered the horseman to dismount.

Somewhat startled by this peremptory command and the fact that the hunter was, if possible, even more deficient in facial symmetry than himself, the jurist began to remonstrate. He was quickly cut short, however, by the remark:

"It's no use talking. I long ago swore that if I ever met a homelier man than I am, I'd shoot him on sight!"

The Judge was quick-witted, and, sizing up the situation, he promptly got off his horse. Folding his arms, he faced his assailant and said,—

"If I am any homelier than you are, for Heaven's sake, do shoot, and be quick about it!"

Then came a hearty mutual laugh, and a black bottle, produced from the Judge's saddle-bags, was duly investigated. After this came self-introductions, and the rising jurist gained an enthusiastic supporter for his future campaigns.

E. P. Howe.

**Waxy and
 the Rat**

WAXEY—so-called on account of his peculiarly colorless complexion—wandered gloomily up the street meditating plans of revenge. He had been wronged by the Italian who kept the fruit-store around the corner—so grossly wronged that for the first time in a year he was moved to tears. They were no idle, woman's tears, but the tears of a man who ponders as he weeps, and the childish paroxysm of anger had already been succeeded by a period of calm thought. But several schemes presented by his precocious wits had been rejected as inadequate, until finally he had begun to despair of ever getting even. His grimy little fists sunk deeper into his trousers' pockets, and his blacking-box dangled dejectedly from his shoulder with none of its customary air of commercial alertness.

Giuseppe, the Italian, wasn't such a bad fellow at heart. His two besetting sins, avarice and vanity, worked their own punishment, for his life was a constant struggle between them. When he called Waxy into his little hole in the wall and set him to polishing his boots he really meant to pay the boy. It was the evening when he called on Bettina, and his boots must be as radiant as the bosom of his one white shirt, which had come from the laundry that same day smooth and shiny as the back of a celluloid hair-brush. But when the job was done and the boot-black arose perspiring with exercise in the close little room, Giuseppe's heart misgave him. A nickel—five cents! It was a tremendous fee for such an infant.

Ralston

Breakfast Food



and
Peaches please the palate.

HERE'S ANOTHER DELICACY:

Slice Peaches into your dish of Ralston Breakfast Food, then add cream and sugar. The acid of fruit brings out the fine flavor of Ralston in striking contrast to inferior foods.

Of all breakfast foods, Ralston is the greatest palate-pleaser, because it's unsterilized. Cooks in five minutes.

Ralston Breakfast Food

retains the delicious flavor Nature has bestowed on Gluterean Wheat, and is cooling nourishment because it don't overheat the blood.

A SAMPLE FOR YOUR GROCER'S NAME. --FREE-- SEVEN DAY NOVELTY FOR CHILDREN.

Purina Health Flour makes "Brain Bread" -- A Roll by mail for Baker's Name.

PURINA MILLS

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"Gooda boy, Wax'," said he; "I give you nica banan' for dat. Ain't you glad?"

"Naw yer don't," growled the boy. "I want five cents. The kids would fire me outer der union if I gave shines for less'n dat."

But Giuseppe, undisturbed and smiling, cut a long, yellow banana from the bunch and proffered it with the air of one conferring the freedom of a city. "You gooda boy," he repeated, showing his white teeth; "I giva you nica banan';" and, heedless of Waxey's protests, forced the fruit into his hand and gently pushed him out of the store. Then after locking the door he retired to the little back room where he slept and cooked his meals to dress for the evening, leaving the boy to pound on the door and shriek black curses at the top of his shrill treble. Wishing to avoid the annoyance of further encounter, the Italian left his quarters by a window which opened into a rear alley; and Waxey, after wearing himself out storming at the entrance, flung the banana on the sidewalk and walked away, sobbing.

And now dark despair was settling about him when, like manna dropped from heaven to feed his starved sense of justice, he beheld right at his feet the means of deliverance, and a great wave of joy swept over him as he stopped and picked up an enormous dead rat. The narrow street rang with his whoop of delight as the tail came off in his grasp and the bloated body dropped back to the pavement. The rat was very—well—ripe. For the same reason its value was doubled.

Most persons, upon making such a glorious find, would have hurried thoughtlessly to their enemy's door, flung the rat in, and departed, well satisfied. But Waxey was not so servile to custom. Dead rats did not often come his way, and he had no intention of wasting such a superb specimen as this.

Charley Herzog, the green-grocer and faithful friend, gave for the asking several sheets of thick wrapping-paper and plenty of white cotton string. It required delicate manipulation to get the rat firmly enveloped in the first sheet, but when this was accomplished it was an easy task, with the aid of much cord and paper, to make a presentable package; and in a few minutes, even though a vague odor still hung about the premises, to the eye the bundle presented every evidence of respectability. Waxey tucked it tenderly under his arm and marched across the street to the laundry of Wu Ling-Fung.

Although it was after dark, the industrious Chinese was still at work.

"Evenin', John," said Waxey cheerfully.

"How do," replied Wu Ling-Fung with a friendly grin.

"Here's some laundry from a friend of mine; and he wants it done quick, see," said Waxey, placing his bundle on the counter, but still keeping his hands upon it.

"All light," answered the Chinaman with another smile. Then from a pile on the shelf he took an oblong piece of thin, pink paper with a row of curious black marks on each end, tore it in half, and gave one of the pieces to the boy. "Checkee," he explained. "You keep."

Waxey clutched the precious paper and darted out of the place. Wu Ling-Fung inserted the remaining half under the string of the package, which he laid on the shelf with others, ready for the morning.

Few smells can compete with those of a Chinese laundry, and it was over

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STATEMENT of The Travelers Insurance Company OF HARTFORD, CONN.

Chartered 1863. (Stock.) Life, Accident and Employers
Liability Insurance.

JAMES G. BATTERSON, President.

PAID-UP CAPITAL

\$1,000,000

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JANUARY 1, 1901.

Total Assets, (Accident Premiums in the hands of Agents NOT INCLUDED.) **\$30,861,030.06**

Total Liabilities (Including Reserves) . . . **26,317,903.25**

Excess Security to Policy-holders, . . . **4,543,126.81**

Surplus, . . . **3,543,126.81**

Paid to Policy-holders since 1864, . . . **42,643,384.92**

Paid to Policy-holders in 1900, . . . **2,908,464.03**

Loaned to Policy-holders on Policies (Life) . . . **1,586,652.20**

Life Insurance in Force, . . . **109,019,851.00**

GAINS FOR THE YEAR 1900.

In Assets, . . . **\$3,167,819.96**

In Insurance in Force (Life Department Only), . . . **8,685,297.06**

Increase in Reserves (Both Departments), (3¼% basis) . . . **2,484,392.52**

Premiums Collected, . . . **6,890,888.55**

Sylvester C. Dunham, Vice-President

John E. Morris, Secretary

J. B. Lewis, M. D., Medical Director and Adjuster

Edward V. Preston, Superintendent of Agencies

Hiram J. Messenger, Actuary

an hour before the proprietor, after sniffing the air several times, stopped work and began to investigate.

Well satisfied with the progress of his plan, Waxey did not imperil its successful fruition by childish precipitation. When he dropped in at the Italian's a week later, it was with a beaming face that would have put the most suspicious person off his guard. It was far from the sunny-tempered child of Italy to harbor resentment for an encounter in which he had come out so satisfactorily, and, business being dull, he was glad to enter into friendly conversation.

"Say, John," said the boy, after an exchange of compliments (he called all foreigners John), "what d'yer s'pose dis is?" and he drew from his ragged pocket the pink laundry check carefully folded in a piece of thick manila paper.

Giuseppe, whose one shirt was laundered by a Chinaman, knew what it was immediately, but he didn't say so. "Where you get him?" he inquired eagerly, reaching out his hand.

"Found her on the sidewalk in front of the Chinees's place around the corner," replied the boy.

"Nothing but ole piece pape'," said the other, laying his long fingers on the check.

"Hold on, John," cried the owner, jerking it away; "I wants dat meself."

"No gooda, no gooda," urged the Italian.

"Why are yer so anxious to git it if it's no good?"

"Here," suggested the other persuasively, "you take uno, due, tree chest-nut; me hav' pape."

"Naw, I wants it fer me stamp alberm," answered Waxey.

But Giuseppe's speculative instinct was aroused, and he determined to have that laundry check at any cost. Who knew to what a treasure of shiny shirts and collars it might not prove the key! How he would dazzle Bettina with them. It was more exciting than a lottery. The outcome of a long argument was that the thin, pink paper, scrawled with hieroglyphics, found a resting place in Giuseppe's blouse, and Waxey left the store richer by a dime.

Waxey's self-respect was restored, his honor satisfied, and he regarded whatever might follow with languid curiosity, as a pure gratuity of his luck. Lurking contentedly in an area-way opposite Wu Ling-Fung's laundry, he saw his victim enter, and hastened across the street where he might watch developments through the window.

Now it was no strange thing for Wu Ling-Fung to receive insults in the shape of dead rodents. Every child on the block understood that a Chinaman's mouth waters perpetually for tender rat-meat, and took care that he got plenty by the avenue of an open door or window. But never before had the sender dared to return and claim his gift. There are bounds even to a Chinaman's forbearance. It was the double insult of this man's asking for the return of his rat that he might use it again that choked Wu Ling-Fung with rage. His eyes had scarcely rested upon the check which the Italian confidently laid on the counter before he was at the fruit-dealer's throat. Giuseppe, robust son of the soil though he was, nearly went to the floor under that wild attack. With an answering yell of terror, he wheeled and fled from the shop and down the street, while at his heels came a little, brown fiend, its features working with passion and cue floating horizontally behind.

50 YEARS REPUTATION



**IS
BEHIND**

18

50

**EVERY
BOTTLE OF**

BURNETT'S VANILLA

FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND LIFE INSURANCE CLAIMS PAID.—The Prudential Insurance Company of America has recently paid its five hundred thousandth claim. The Prudential is the only life-insurance company confining its operations exclusively to the United States that can point to such a wonderful record.

These five hundred thousand claim payments show a total amount of over \$45,000,000 paid by the Prudential on Industrial claims alone, the daily number of payments now averaging over two hundred. The large amount of want and distress prevented and relieved through the just distribution of this vast sum of money explains why Industrial insurance is so popular in America.

On policies issued by The Prudential on the Industrial plan, the premiums are collected weekly at the homes of the policy-holders in sums of five, ten, or fifteen cents and upwards per week. The Prudential has liberalized its policies very materially since the organization of the Company twenty-five years ago, and in addition has established for itself a very enviable position in the world of life insurance by arranging for the payment of all just claims immediately upon receipt of proofs of death. Not only is this true, but it has even arranged to pay certain claims by telegraph and others directly through its field representatives; so that, while every precaution is taken by the Company to protect the interests of existing policy-holders, the money is placed in the hands of the beneficiary at the earliest possible moment. This practically doubles the value of life insurance, particularly among those holding Industrial policies, where there is frequently no other ready money at hand.

Another feature showing the Company's liberal treatment of its policy-holders is that of additional benefits, by which an Industrial policy, after it has been five years in force, is credited with an additional amount of insurance without any additional expense whatever to the insured.

Considering both Ordinary and Industrial, The Prudential has paid over \$50,000,000 to its policy-holders since its organization.

Waxey did not trouble himself to follow and see what happened. He was a philosopher, and more than satisfied already. He spent half of his ten cents for a box of twenty cigarettes, and, with a lighted one in his mouth and his box swung jauntily over his shoulder, made his way to City Hall Park, where, as the dispenser of twenty "butts," he was a prince among his fellows for the rest of the day.

Allan P. Ames.

Adam's
Soliloquy

"I AM satisfied," soliloquized Adam as the gates of Eden were locked upon him. "Eve is fastened in there with a snake. I'll watch the fun through the palings."

C. McL.

Compensation

LOVE came to the Woman who stood in the Garden of Youth, and at her feet he cast roses, blossoms rare and sweet, symbolic of Love himself.

And the Woman gathered them into her arms, flushing and smiling as she pressed them to her heart.

Life came that way and paused for a moment before the Woman.

"Ah, my child," he warned, "beware! beware! there are thorns as well as roses."

But the Woman only smiled happily, and for reply raised the blossoms to her lips, then pressed them again to her heart.

She feared not, for the roses were so sweet, and the thorns so cunningly concealed.

The dewy fragrance of the roses filled the air, and as Life passed on, Love laughed aloud—joyously, triumphantly.

The years went by, and with their passing the Woman had gone from the Garden of Youth, out into the long, long way that lies between Youth and Age, Dreams and Realities.

Again Life paused beside her. When he spoke, in his voice was a touch of sadness, but on his face only scorn appeared.

"Child, did I not warn you? Had you cast the roses away, you would never have found the thorns."

For the roses had faded, the light had gone from the Woman's face, the joy from her heart; and Love—Love was done.

But though through tears, the eyes that looked out upon Life shone bravely and steadily, and again for reply she pressed the roses—now discovered of their thorns—to her lips and to her heart.

She had no regrets; for though the thorns hurt cruelly, the memory of the roses' sweetness was greater than the pain.

And as Life looked upon the Woman, the scorn faded from his face, and in its place dawned a great pity and a great understanding.

M. Palmer Sweet.

*Instantly Relieves—Finally Cures***HAY FEVER**


INE ORANGEINE
A Safe and Sure
PAIN ALLAYER - BRACER - CURE
DIRECTIONS - IN - SIDE

Proved by wide long public test to avert or promptly cure all pain, seasonable and common ailments—
Headache, Neuralgia, Colds, Fatigue, "Grip," Indigestion, Heat Prostration, Woman's Suffering, Hay Fever, Asthma, Sea Sickness, Etc.
Feeds nerves and brain, regulates stomach and liver, acts instantly without drug effect.
Used and endorsed by hosts of prominent individuals and physicians wherever introduced and tested.

"ORANGEINE" is sold by Druggists where it has been introduced, in 10, 25 and 50 cent packages. On receipt of two cent stamp we will be glad to mail trial package with full information of human usefulness and prominent endorsement.
ORANGEINE CHEMICAL CO., CHICAGO.

MR. C. J. VAN HOUTEN, who died recently in Algiers, rightfully deserved the title of prince of cocoa manufacturers. The house of Van Houten began business in Weesp, Holland, in 1817, having been launched on its great career by the father of the late proprietor. The son, by his skill, energy, and inventive genius, brought the business to its present proportions. He had faith in the potency of printers' ink, and at one time advertised to the extent of one million dollars a year.

In the first advertising done in the United States, merely the name was displayed. People wondered what it signified, and some even suspected that all was not right with a certain advertising manager. The next month the familiar phrase, "Best and goes farthest," appeared. This caused the reader to become only the more inquisitive. Some thought it was baking powder. Everybody tried to solve the riddle. The third month brought forth the name of the article. Thus had it been thoroughly advertised and its sales given an impetus in a unique but an effective manner. The borders surrounding the advertisements have always been a special feature.

In 1889 the house was authorized by royal decree to assume the name "Royal Cocoa Factory." The factory, which covers an area of eighty-five acres, employs three thousand five hundred people, the balance of the population of Weesp, six thousand, having been at some former time identified with the institution. This loyalty on the part of employer and employee tells a rare story of mutual regard. The children have no thought of ever getting employment elsewhere. The city possesses all the advantages of other places of its size,—theatres, schools, hotels, etc., but everything is owned or controlled by the house of Van Houten, and no other factory is to be seen in the town. Mr. Van Houten was well known as an extensive traveller, having visited all parts of the world, and was in the United States at the time of the World's Fair. He was an extremely affable companion, of a jovial nature, and clever at repartee. Music and the sciences were his pleasure and recreation. He was never married.

**The Won't-
Go-in-Your-
Pocket Match**

"THE tightest fix I ever was in, was in a Kentucky town," said my pick-up companion in a Pullman smoker. He was drawn on parallel lines to six feet two, and without a protuberance until his enormous nose stood out from between a pair of eyes riotous with humor. "I reckon there are a certain number of inventions come into this world with every boy baby born Down East. That is where I come from. And I reckon he is bound to get them up and off on the world while he is in it. When I was six years old I invented a revolving fine-tooth comb. It was on the plan of the old-fashioned horse-rake. When it got full of dandruff and combings, all you had to do was to tilt it a little. It dug into the scalp, turned over, emptied itself, and went to combing on the clean side. When I was about ten I got up a new way of sawing wood. The saw was immovable, teeth up. You moved the stick over the saw instead of the saw over the stick. The weight of the stick saved the pressure you have to put on saws to make them cut. One day, when I was in full motion with a stick, it broke. I fell on the saw, and before I could stop myself I was nearly cut in two. The Doctor argued father into thinking that saw would not be popular because it would, under like circumstances, slit people lengthwise, which, he said, being a physician, was more dangerous than cross-cutting. I didn't do much more at inventing until I was twenty. My genius was occupied at devilment at school. Then I got up a patent courting-bench. It was five feet long, with a slippery seat inclining from each end to the middle. There were two cushions, one at each end, that telescoped. Sit a girl on one end and a fellow on the other, and they were bound to slide together. I made enough out of that to pay my schooling. It is popular in some parts yet. I don't often travel without one with me.

"A few years ago I invented what I called 'the won't-go-in-your-pocket match.' It is a good thing. I haven't looked at the last census, so I don't know just how many millions of smokers there are in the United States, but there are several. And every mother's son of them will steal matches if he gets a chance. I reckon there is a million more that will take matches just to have them in their pocket. They come handy. My non-pocketing match is five inches long. You can't get it into any regulation pocket. If you do, it will stick out and show. Then you're caught. See? The liquor fellows and restaurant fellows are the ones most robbed. My match is for their protection. Every customer feels he has a sort of right to fill his pocket with their matches. It costs them a pile for matches.

"I got a partner with money, put up a factory, and went to making them. Then I made a list of the 'wide-open' States. Kentucky is 'wide open' and heads the list. I started for Kentucky. I didn't have to say a word; just pulled out samples, stuck them in my pocket, took a drink, and walked around the saloons. The barkeepers and bosses were on to me in a minute with 'Stranger, where can we get matches like them?' I sold them so all-fired fast that the price of pine timber went up. Every 'wide-open' in Kentucky had my matches. I was at my last town and was setting them up lively for the boys at a liquor-shop about half a mile from the railroad station. I got kinder enthused and felt jokey. I timed myself for that half mile and my leaving train. Right on the minute I called up the house. We stimulated. I said 'Good-by' all around. Then I picked up a bunch of my matches and I said, 'Boys, I'll show you how to beat the 'won't-go-into-your-pocket match.' I gave the bunch a strain, broke off



La France & Bride Roses.

Sample of panel pictures given with our goods.
Send for Catalogue.

Why not have the Best?

B. T. Babbitt's Best Soap 1776 Soap Powder

Well made from cleanest, purest materials.
Will not injure clothes nor redden hands.

—Made by—

B. T. Babbitt, New York.

Sold by grocers everywhere.

EMINENT PHYSICIANS are eagerly studying the problem of baby feeding. Borden's Eagle Brand Condensed Milk is recommended by the leading family physicians. It is always safe and reliable. Send ten cents for "Baby's Diary," 71 Hudson Street, New York.

THE BUSINESS WOMAN AWHEEL.—A business woman who worked from eight to twelve hours every day gives in the interview below some strong reasons why she rides a wheel. Her residence is some three miles distant from her place of business, and, weather permitting, she rides to and from all the year round. She finds though she might leave the store tired and fagged, before she reached home she was thoroughly recuperated. Her own words are as follows:

"Two years ago my physician said I was breaking down. I knew it before he told me. I acted with promptness. I purchased a house in the suburbs, three miles from the store, and bought a bicycle. I took an outing of two weeks and learned to ride it, and unless the weather forbids I ride to and from my place of business. It was an experiment, but it has proved a great success. My health rapidly improved. It gave me what I needed, exercise in the open air. In the morning I enter the store refreshed and invigorated. In the evening I arrive home rested and buoyant in feeling. My children have become bicyclists also, and come down a couple of miles each night to meet me and escort me home. We make quite a family party, and often wheel off a few miles into the country before turning homeward. It is not difficult, if one has a little imagination, to realize what a merry time we have and how happy we all are, when, fresh and glowing, we all wheel up to the door, where mother stands waiting to welcome us.

"This is my reason for riding the bicycle and why I use it, love it, and thank God for it."

three inches of the wood, and stuck the match part in my vest pocket. 'There,' I said, in my most reckless tone. The boys shouted. The bartender reached for his gun. The boss hauled out a black-jack. The waiters picked up chairs. I saw I was in for a feud. I took out six panes of ten-by-twelve glass, made a necklace of the sash, and if it hadn't been for these long legs of mine and the train being on time, I'd have been buried in Kentucky with nothing but a broken 'won't-go-in-your-pocket match' for a monument. I'm not going back to Kentucky."

Charles McIlvaine.

"WHITTLLING SI"

By Edwin L. Sabin

SI BARTHOLOMEW—he can
Whittle anything, you bet!
He's about the smartes' man
That I guess I ever met.
Onct he whittled me a boat,
An' I sailed it in the drain,
An' there wasn't room to float,
So' I'm waitin' for a rain.

Si's knife's never dull a bit;
My, you ought to see him hone!
For he mixes in some spit—
Yes, sir!—on the whettin' stone!
An' the other day he said,
When I asked his knife, to use:
"Sakes alive! You'll cut your head
Clean off, right above your shoes!"

An' he's made a bully bow,
An' some arrers, an' a gun,
An' a windmill that'll go
If you hold it out an' run;
An' a dagger an' a sword,
An' a teeny drinkin'-cup—
He jes takes a common board
An' he whittles it smack up!

He sits 'roun' all day, Si does,
Whittlin' shavin's in his lap.
Pa, he says there never was
Such a lazy, shif'less chap,
An' he doesn't earn his keep—
But I think he does, you see,
'Cause he has to work a heap
Makin' handy things for me.

A KNIGHT OF THE HIGHWAY

BY
CLINTON SCOLLARD

AUTHOR OF A MAN-AT-ARMS,
THE SON OF A TORY, ETC.



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1901

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